

IVAN VENEDIKOV
NIKOLAI TODOROV

PREHISTORIC AND ANTIQUE RELICS IN BULGARIA



SOFIA PRESS

Translated by
L. VESSELINOVA

English Editor :
N. GELIAZKOVA

Artist
DIMITER KARTALEV

Bulgaria occupies the extreme south-east of Europe. It lies in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula, in the hinterland of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and is crossed by the land routes connecting Europe and Asia. The straits dividing the two continents have occasionally hampered relations between them, but have never separated them entirely. They are in fact the only two points of contact between Europe and Asia. Due to this natural location of the Eastern Balkans, European culture in these parts was from a very early period affected by the civilizations of the peoples in Asia. From the fifth millenium B. C. up to the middle of the second, the civilization in the lands of today's Bulgaria developed under the strong influence of the culture on the other side of the Sea of Marmara.

The remains of some houses have been found grouped in fortified settlements. The fortress walls as well as the walls of the houses are built of wattle-and-daub. This is a feature that distinguishes Thracian settlements in the Balkans from the Thracian prehistoric settlement mounds in Asia Minor, which were usually built of adobe. The houses here were ornamented with decorative plaster and their inhabitants made fine painted pottery, a primitive form of genuine art. This period has also left evidence of the spontaneous development of primitive sculpture, its media being terra-cota and bone, as in many places in Europe, and stone and marble as well. The deities of that primitive population may be seen alongside animal images and zoomorphic vases. The ideas prevailing among this primitive society in the eastern parts of the Balkan Peninsula

came from the East. But they were rendered in an original manner by the craftsmen of this settled population which had developed virtually self-contained for centuries and to a certain extent, isolated from the rest of the world. Therefore the oriental themes from the Asian pantheon have here received a specific Balkan colouring. The goddess of nativity and the continuation of the human race, of fertility and the earth, was extensively portrayed, represented as a pregnant woman. The local artists depicted her in a sketchy, conventional way, like all other images of deities and animals.

The tranquil life of that primitive society was occasionally punctuated by crises which grew particularly intense during the second millenium B. C., when a gradual decline of the cultural level was followed by a period of sudden and abrupt change. The fortified settlements disappeared, and a mobile and unsettled way of life was adopted. The population, extremely primitive, did not remain long in one place. Scientists have so far failed to establish whether this cultural shift was due to a rapid and profound change in the way of life of the inhabitants of the Eastern Balkans, or to the invasion of a new and more primitive population. This change is assumed to have occurred throughout the whole area under discussion about the middle of the second millenium, when the Balkan Peninsula was entering upon the last phase of the Bronze Age. The old Greek legends preserved in Homer's epos and other writings make mention of the Thracians. They inhabited the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula, and their kings Orpheus,

Rhexus, Maron are referred to as living at the time of or before the Trojan War.

The Thracians, whose main occupation was stock-breeding, lived a nomadic or semi-nomadic life, just like the Scythians who came to southern Russia early in the first millenium B. C. and the Iranian tribes that made their appearance there in the middle of the second millenium. They were divided into many tribes ruled by patriarchal priest kings, who held both political and religious power. The family was based on polygamy, and religion on polytheism. The Thracian deities were anthropomorphic, represented in human form. Unlike the Greeks and some other ancient peoples, however, the Thracians believed in the immortality of the soul and the existence of paradise. This led to different and sometimes strange beliefs. With some of the tribes, there was mourning when a child was born, while funerals were an occasion for great jubilation and merry-making. Among other tribes, living in the Strouma River valley, there was a custom for the dead man's favourite wife to be sacrificed by her next of kin. The wife was then buried with her husband.

The Thracians' tribal life under the rule of their kings, during the first millenium B. C. bore greater resemblance to that of the peoples in Asia Minor, than to the Greeks who were geographically closer. The early period of Thracian civilization (1500—1000 B. C.) is still largely a puzzle to historians, although several important artifacts have been found to date back to just that time. The most spectacular is the Vulchitrun Treasure, exquisitely made of gold. These interest-

ing finds are striking against a background of a generally primitive civilization and art, the latter characterized by the geometric ornamentation of pottery which seems to have been popular at the time. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* describe the palaces of the Thracian kings, standing apart from the settlements, with spacious halls of great splendour. Gold and silver vessels adorned the rulers' tables, and generous offerings were made to the deities in the palaces.

Naturally the kings needed to have external attributes of their status, insignia of their royal power. These included just as in Asia Minor and Iran, ritual axes with the head decorated with animal figures and heads, as well as bronze jewellery with ornaments of plant and animal origin; the ideas for these came via Asia Minor from the more highly civilized Hither Asia. These features were widespread in Thrace in the first several centuries B. C., although they were interpreted in the spirit of Thracian art and executed in its characteristic geometric style. In this way animal ornaments penetrated from Hither Asia into Thrace. They were a distinguishing feature of Eastern art, which appeared towards the end of the 7th century among the Scythians, the Thracians' eastern neighbours, and probably about that time or even earlier in Thrace.

The quiet life of the Thracian tribes in the 7th and 6th century B. C. was disrupted by a series of invasions and raids. The Thracian population along the coast was either driven out or subjugated by the Ionian Greeks coming from the islands in the Aegean Sea or the cities in Asia Minor, which at the time were

strongly influenced by the culture and art of the East. They founded a number of colonies, the most important of which were Enos, Marone, and Abdera, along the Aegean coast, the Thracian Chersones founded by Athenians, Byzantium and Perinthus, Apollonia, Mesembria, Odessos and Dionysopolis, along the Black Sea coast. All these cities were organized like the Greek city-states, as small independent republics with strongly democratic tendencies. Thanks to the cheap labour available, they set up extensive farms, artisans' workshops and trading establishments doing business overseas with other cities and countries. Greek colonization was past its climax when the troops of the Persians, the most civilized nation at the time, invaded Thrace at the end of the 6th century. They kept the southern Thracian areas occupied for more than three decades: from 512 to 478 B. C. In 511 the Scythians, the Thracians' eastern neighbours, crossed the lands of the Getae, inhabiting the area around Danube's delta, and ravaged Thrace for three years. When the Persians withdrew the Thracians formed a large kingdom for the first time.

The Thracian kingdom was founded by the Odrysae, a tribe inhabiting the Eastern Rhodopes along the Arda River valley, who under their king Teres extended their power over the Tinae in the Strandja Mountain, the Nipsei around Nessebur, the Getae along the Danube and the Bessi along the middle reaches of the Maritsa around today's Plovdiv. Sitalces, the son of Teres, also seized the areas along the upper reaches of the Isker and Strouma Rivers. But the

kingdom disintegrated as early as the end of the 5th century. It had a last brief revival under King Kotis, after which it fell under the power of the Macedonians after prolonged resistance, in 348.

The Macedonian kings Philip II and Alexander the Great, who subdued all the rest of the Thracian tribes, kept the situation of that province the same. It was now ruled by a strategus, as it had been under the kings of the Odrysae. There were many kings and rulers of separate tribes. While Thrace was free it used the coins of the Greek cities; when it became a Macedonian province the coins minted by the Macedonian kings were put in circulation. After the death of Alexander the Great, his Thracian ruler Lysimachus proclaimed himself an independent sovereign. He had to fight both the Greek cities and the Thracian kings in order to impose his power. His victories, however, were not complete, and Seuthes III in the Valley of Roses, Sparatok in Cabilé (today's Yambol), Dromihaïtes, ruler of the Getae, Sadala, of the Nipsei, and many other tribal chiefs managed to remain at the head of their tiny Thracian states. The death of Lysimachus, who had been trying to restore the old vast Macedonian Empire, after his defeat in Asia Minor in 280 B. C., opened up an opportunity for the liberation of Thrace.

As early as the seventh and sixth centuries B. C. Thrace suffered from a certain cultural dualism, being under the influence of both the East and Greece. Thracian civilization developed under a strong Eastern influence. While in the beginning it was only ideas that penetrated,

later at the time of the Persian occupation of the south of Thrace, many Persian and generally Eastern forms and motifs were introduced into Thrace. The Thracian aristocracy imitated the habits of the aristocracy of the Persian state: the kings and the wealthy started to use ornaments similar to those used by the Persians, gold pectorals and silver and bronze trappings for their horses; like the Persians, they decorated their shields and belts, and used richly ornamented gold and silver vessels at their tables; the women adorned themselves with magnificent necklaces, earrings and bracelets. All this is evidence of a wealthy life in the Thracian royal palaces, a taste for luxurious objects among a comparatively restricted circle of rich courtiers, who lived off the labour of the Thracian tribes. The Thracian kings did not try to iron out tribal distinctions by setting up big towns that might have developed into important centres of crafts and production. For that reason the rich Thracian funerals, that contain the objects associated with this luxurious way of life, usually consist of items of varied origin. Part of them, mainly bronze vessels, pottery, glass, alabaster and gold jewellery, come from the Greek cities in and outside Thrace. Another group, made by Thracian craftsmen, have the features of a superficial court art, which was cultivated in the Thracian palaces or around the residences of wealthy Thracians.

Art in the Greek colonies, which supplied a large part of the luxury goods in use at the end of the sixth century, developed under the increasingly strong influence of Athens. Statues and reliefs

made in the Thracian colonies throughout the fifth century and intended for the Greek population, imitated the sculpture of Athens. But many luxury objects made by the Greeks were based on motifs or shapes which the Greeks borrowed from the East and more specifically Persia, which was the neighbour of Thrace for 200 years. This Eastern influence is especially strongly felt in gold and silver vessels, which often present a mixture of Greek and Persian art. This is the case of the rhyta and phials discovered in the burial mounds at Douvanli, Rozoved and elsewhere, and those of the Panagyurishtë Treasure, which were intended for use by the Thracian aristocracy rather than the Greeks. This is also the case of many gold ornaments wrought in perfect filigree.

The Thracian craftsmen's method of work and taste were quite different. Unlike the free art of the Greeks in the fifth and fourth century B. C., they created an art that was conventional and often naive. Conforming to the traditions of older Thracian art, the local master preferred animal themes, though rather than representing animals that were common in Thrace, he depicted more and more often lions, gryphons, and various fantastic animals, which he either invented or took ready from Eastern art, subjecting them to his own interpretation. In doing these figures, as well as the human form, he made use of certain fixed attitudes, characteristic of Eastern art, representing the figures either in full profile or full face. The eye is usually depicted in all its length, thighs and shoulders are strongly developed, the poses are rigid and the figures

invariably clothed. A whole series of Eastern motifs and even stylistic media had made their way into Thracian art, such as the attempts to represent the animal shoulder as an ornament which the Thracian artist either took as it is, or reworked into a different one. This led to the creation in Thrace of local toreutics, which in subject-matter and means of expression was close to the toreutics and art of the Scythian masters, without, however, being completely identical.

Sometimes the Thracians took their themes or expressive media from the East but in the form that they had acquired in the hands of the Greek masters, while in other cases they reworked purely Greek subjects in the Thracian manner. In this way the two kinds of art that were cultivated in Thrace, the art of the sparse but well organized Greek population, and the art of the Thracian craftsmen at the courts appeared full of Eastern forms and motifs, in the objects intended for the heart of Thrace. This fact lent Thracian civilization a variety that few other countries have known. In a typically Thracian monument like the tomb at Mezek, Svilengrad district, dated 350 B. C., one finds a bronze statue of a boar which is the work of Greek artists from a peripheral centre. The same is true of the paintings in the Kazanluk tomb: a typical Thracian monument, decorated by a Greek artist according to all the rules of Greek art, depicting a typical Eastern procession of donors about the year 280 B. C. The parallel existence of Thracian and Greek art in the same area undermined the Thracians' confidence in the genuine value of

stylized Eastern art and their kings, when they had some important monument to decorate, turned to Greek just as often as to Thracian artists.

Thracian art, no matter whether created by Greek or Thracian craftsmen, was intended for a small part of the Thracian population: the wealthy and prosperous Thracian aristocracy. In its purpose it closely resembles Eastern art and more particularly the art of the Achaemenidae. Due exactly to its class character, it was doomed to die with the class that supported and encouraged it. With the invasion of the Celts in 279, that art died with all the wealth of Thrace. The 63 years of Celtic domination over Thrace proved sufficient for every trace of that art to disappear. It suffered the same fate as the art of the Achaemenidae in Persia after the Macedonian invasion, or Scythian art in southern Russia on the coming of the Sarmatians. No important relics have come down to us from the 3rd century and even the two following centuries. They reappear only after the beginning of Roman domination. The establishment of Roman rule in Thrace was preceded by a period of poverty when the Thracian funerals, the sole source in our study of Thracian civilization, offer scanty finds. At that time, during the second and first centuries B. C., the Thracian kingdom

of the Odrysae was restored, but it had lost much of its importance. Divided into several regions, each ruled by a strategus, it was still composed of small rural districts, and cities were few and far between. When the Romans came from Macedonia to the Danube and occupied

the valley of that river, the kingdom continued in existence, over most of present-day Eastern Bulgaria. At that time it became a Roman protectorate, which gradually lost its independence and became the province of Thrace. A long time after the establishment of Roman rule and the division of the Thracian lands into two provinces, Moesia and Thrace, due to the rural character of most of the Thracian territory, it continued to be divided into small districts, each ruled by a strategus. Only at the time of Trajan, when the Empire's frontiers were pushed as far as the Carpathian Mountains, thus making Thrace and Moesia interior provinces, did urban life really begin there. The old Thracian cities, such as Cabilé (Yambol) which had been founded by Philip II in the fourth century B. C., Philippopolis (Plovdiv), Berrhoea (Stara Zagora) were reorganized. Other settlements, like Serdica (Sofia) and Pautalia (Kyustendil) acquired a city status, and many new towns were founded: Nicopolis on the Danube (Nikyp near Turnovo), Marcianopolis (near Devnya). Many of the frontier settlements, such as Oescus (at Gigen, Nikopol district), Ratiaria (Archar), Durostorum (Silistra) and many others grew into cities as early as the first century B. C.

The Roman rulers constantly brought new settlers to the two provinces: Thrace and especially to Moesia. They colonized the land together with the Roman veterans in various towns, who gave the settlers large lots of land. The soldiers of the legions and auxiliary troops also formed a portion of the population of the cities in which garrisons were stationed, as they did not

live in barracks. Therefore the Roman rule quickly established an urban way of life in which the indigenous Thracian population was not the main factor and was in fact only gradually taking its place. Urban life in Thrace flourished in the 3rd century A. D., when not only the urban but the rural population as well, was drawn into the life of the province as an active factor.

At that time the legions and auxiliary troops had long been recruited from the local Thracian population, who used all the privileges to which they were entitled by their share in the defence of the Empire. The situation in Thrace and Moesia continued unchanged almost up to the age of Christianity, although in the last two decades of the third century the Romans, under the pressure of the Goths, vacated their territories on the other side of the Danube, making Moesia a frontier province once again in 271.

The creation of an urban structure by the Romans in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula led to a flourishing of culture and the arts in the two provinces, Moesia and Thrace. Many workshops were set up. Fine roads were built which facilitated communications within the country. It no longer needed to import key commodities or luxury goods from other countries. The Roman cities in Thrace were organized on the principle of older cities in Greece and Italy. Each had a curia composed of the wealthiest citizens, which governed the territory of the city, embracing many of the outlying villages. The cities were surrounded by fortress walls, and had squares and straight streets running between rectangular blocks of buildings, formed by rich private

houses and large public buildings, sanctuaries, theatres, city halls and baths. Water was piped into them from springs a long distance away by aqueducts, and sewerage systems were laid down. The rich men's houses inside the city or outside, in the surrounding country, were decorated with graceful colonnades, magnificent stonework ceilings, fine bronze and marble statues which copied the masterpieces of Antiquity.

Rich residences had splendid furniture: tables and chairs decorated with highly artistic ornaments of wood, stone, wrought iron and bronze. Magnificent bedsteads and chariots decorated with bronze appliqué work and exquisite sets of bronze, silver and glass vessels added to the luxury of the life of the Thracian rich at the time. As it brought the taste for affluence of Roman city life, the Roman provincial aristocracy in Moesia and Thrace also created in these provinces a wealthy class which was capable of maintaining the way of life on the same level as in the other Roman provinces. For all that, the local Thracian population managed to leave their own stamp on Roman civilization in Thrace and Moesia, just as that strange and mysterious people had done in an earlier age.

A large part of the Thracian population kept their original life habits unchanged. They continued to inter their dead in burial mounds, with some of the old barbarian customs slipping back into use, such as the custom of placing with the dead man his chariot harnessed with horses, and to build large tombs and fill them with a variety of offerings: bronze and silver vessels, weapons, helmets and precious jewellery.

The old Thracian sanctuaries, tucked away in isolated mountain spots or near some of the fine, abundant-flowing springs, where the Thracians made offerings to their deities, were real havens of original Thracian culture in that period. The stone and bronze sculpture which became widespread at the end of the first century, now regularly represented the Thracian deities, most prominent among which was an equestrian god which the Thracians called Heros and ranged among the gods of the Greek and Roman pantheon. Thracian sculpture was significantly affected by Greek and Roman sculpture, whose influence was paramount in both gravestone and religious sculpture. Greek urban art existing along the Thracian coast, assumed an increasingly important role in the eastern regions of Thrace. In its western regions, where Roman influence had developed in Macedonia two centuries before it ever penetrated into Thrace, the tombstone statue became widely used.

To parallel this division of influence, two languages came to be adopted for official use in the Thracian lands: Greek in the east and south and Latin in the northwest. An art that is less well represented in finds is painting, our knowledge of which derives from a few large and interesting tombs, the tomb at Silistra of the late third century being the only one in a satisfactory state of preservation.

The salient feature of the Thracian art and culture of that time is the gradual, more and more complete integration of Thrace into the Eastern Hellenistic and Roman world, of which it remained an inseparable part. The passing of many

motifs from the western provinces into Roman Thrace did not lend Thracian art an absolutely Roman aspect. Quite the contrary, in the most ordinary representations, and occasionally in rarer ones as well, one sees the figures, proportions, bodily shapes and even the folds of the garments from the Hellenistic world of the Roman East. In fact the development of art and culture in Roman Moesia and Thrace illustrate the slow emergence of that deep change which was to lead to the adoption of Christianity in the fourth century and to the separation of the Eastern Roman Empire. This is so because the Thracian lands lay in the hinterlands of the two points of contact between Europe and Asia: the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

The slow process of Hellenization of the Eastern world, with which the Thracians had been linked for centuries, made them see in the deities governing the world the Greek Zeus and Hera rather than the Roman Jupiter and Juno, the Greek Hermes rather than the Roman Mercury, and the Greek Artemis rather than the Roman Diana. Where the Thracians failed to see Roman culture, Roman religion and Roman art through their own eyes, they saw them through the eyes of the Hellenistic world of which the Thracians came to form an integral part though it may sound like a paradox precisely during the Roman age. A Greek colony in Thrace, Byzantium, founded by the Thracians a long time before Greek colonization, was to become the new Rome: Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.

PRIMITIVE ART IN BULGARIA

In Bulgaria, as elsewhere, primitive art was closely linked with religion in the Neolithic (6000—4000), Aeneolithic (4000—3000) and Bronze Ages (3000—1100). In his attempts to depict his deities in anthropomorphic forms, primitive man used simple means of expression. The body, limbs and head were portrayed in a markedly stylized form without particular regard to anatomy. Whether the primitive sculptor worked in bone, baked clay or marble, he invariably created conventional images and patterns. He made use of additional decoration, such as small incised lines, pits or holes. Some of his designs gradually became accepted as canons, although they did not indicate any definite parts of the body. Thus, for instance, in depicting a nude goddess, the sculptor was bound to engrave a triangle on the abdomen. It was likewise not so important for him to depict the shape of the deity's ears, as the holes made in them to which the ear-rings were attached. The portrayal of animals or figurines on vessels of a zoomorphic form was also far removed from realistic vision. In shaping the zoomorphic

vessels, the primitive artists seem to have wavered between the idea of a vessel and the idea of an animal. As a result, the animals acquired quite curious forms. Sometimes using a number of colours in the pottery, mostly red, white and black, among other tints, the artists decorated the vessels with simple ornaments in geometric patterns.

What is strange, however, is that animal and human figures are only treated in relief and are wholly absent in painting on pottery.

Models of prehistoric dwellings with realistic details of the roof structure and wall decorations are frequent among finds of those days. The windows of these dwellings are round and the doors, too, are sometimes depicted as simple round openings.

1. Rock drawings dating from the late Bronze Age, in the Magoura Cave, Vidin district, executed in guano on a rough rock surface. Men, women, animals and birds are portrayed with great simplicity and naivety.

Idols dating back to the Neolithic and Aeneolithic age in the Bulgarian lands:

2. Made of bone

3 and 4. of baked clay. In some cases the primitive artist made fully stylized drawings, and in others he depicted quaint images of his deities, using very simple means of expression, as is the case with the idol from Bal Bunar, a village near Roussé.

5. Head of an Aeneolithic idol made of clay, from Dinya, a village near Stara Zagora. In all idols the ears are represented with many holes on them. In some, belonging to the late Aeneolithic Age, when metals became known to man, these holes have copper rings fixed in them.

6. In the Late Aeneolithic Age the human figure was also modelled on pottery, which was decorated with anthropomorphic ornaments, as shown on the Late Aeneolithic clay vessel from Hotnitsa, a village near Turnovo.

Clay statuettes of deities were widely used:

7. From an unknown site.

8. Anthropomorphic vessel. Stone sculpture was also coming into use in the Aeneolithic Age.

9. Marble idol from Blagoevo, a village near Razgrad.

10. Late Bronze Age jug of baked clay from Novo Selo, Vidin district, ornamented with an incised geometrical pattern filled in with white paint, and with modelled protuberances above the handle and on the body of the vessel.

11. An Early Aeneolithic vessel in the shape of a water-lily, from the Azmashka Mound near Stara Zagora.

12. Cult table dating back to the Neolithic age; from Karanovo, a village near Stara Zagora.
Zoomorphic vessels of the Aeneolithic Age.

13. From Karanovo, a village near Stara Zagora.

14. From Kodja Dermen, a village near Shoumen.

15. Late Bronze Age vessel of baked clay from Pazardjik district.

16. Early Neolithic vessel of baked clay from Karanovo, a village near Stara Zagora.

17. Middle Bronze Age cup (*Kantharos*) from the village of Mihalich, Svilengrad district.

18. Model of a prehistoric dwelling, made of baked clay, dating from the Late Aeneolithic period, found in the mound at the village of Kodja Dermen near Shoumen.

19. Early Aeneolithic clay vessel from the Azmashka Mound near Stara Zagora.

THRACIAN ART

Monuments of Thracian culture and art are known to us from chance finds, for which no adequate explanation has been found so far, or from the numerous Thracian burial mounds. The oldest and most interesting of these mounds are in South-east Bulgaria, the largest of them being the complexes of burial mounds at Douvanli, a village in Plovdiv district, dating from the end of the sixth and from the fifth century B. C.; at Mezek, a village near Svilengrad, dating from the second half of the fourth and the beginning of the third century B. C., as well as many other individual mounds, the richest of which is the Mogilanska Mound in Vratsa, Northern Bulgaria, dating from the first half of the fourth century B. C. A brilliant picture of the life of the well-to-do-Thracian, who possessed a wealth of gold and silver ornaments and fine crockery for his table, is evoked by the numerous burial gifts placed in the tomb of the deceased: vessels of baked clay and of metal (bronze, silver and gold), ornaments found on the dead and on their horses, buried together with them with all their trappings.

Many of the relics found in the mounds, such as gold pectorals, silver ornaments on the horses' trappings and on shields, greaves and helmets, are the work of the old Thracian masters. The oldest among them, dating back to the period from the eighth to the sixth century B. C., are made of bronze, and from the fifth century onwards precious metals were increasingly used. The old local, geometrical art gradually made way for an art influenced by the work of the Eastern master craftsmen. A great many of the basic forms, characteristic of the Thracian ornaments and jewellery, were borrowed from neighbouring peoples, most frequently from those under the rule of the Achaemenidae, in the Persian kingdom and, less frequently, from the Greeks.

The gold, semicircular pectorals, the oldest specimens of which were found at Douvanli, are of Oriental origin, and reveal the artistic conceptions and taste of the Thra-

Thracian master craftsmen. The shape of the other gold pectorals, found in the tombs of both men and women, is common to many of the peoples who inhabited the coast of the Aegean. The ornaments of the horses' trappings are also Oriental in character, some of them being made according to designs borrowed from Asia Minor; they depict individual animals or groups of animals, or parts of them. Other patterns were created by Thracian master craftsmen, whose reaction to the cultural impact of the East was the same as that of the Scythians, the ancient inhabitants of present-day Southern Russia.

The portrayal of the human figure, almost always shown in profile or full face, with the eye drawn in its full length, is characteristic of Thracian art in the period from the end of the sixth to the beginning of the third century B. C. Both animal and human figures are always very distinctly stylized. Moreover, the Thracian artists invariably used means typical of the Persian artists or else, means of their own which were, in fact, equal to the former in craftsmanship. Thracian art is therefore completely alien to Greek art in its development, even in cases where purely Greek subjects were reproduced. Monuments of the domestic Thracian art, which developed at the courts of the kings and the rich Thracians, are comparatively rare, since this art was mainly displayed in the forging of silver and gold. (This art was not to be found in the work of Thracian craftsmen whose products were intended for the vast majority of the population, such as pottery, for instance.) In its origins and development, court art is similar to that of the Scythians, noted for its animal ornamentation which is also characteristic of Thracian art in general. Thracian and Scythian art developed parallel to one another and found their expression in similar objects and works of art.

20. Fragment of a clay vessel from the village of Dolna Manastiritsa near Elhovo, dating from the fifth century B. C., depicting a goat with its legs folded under its body (as in Oriental and Scythian art) and its head turned, looking backwards.

21. Bronze figure of a stag from the town of Sevlievo, ninth to seventh century B. C., made in the style of the old geometric art, with free modelling only of the

shoulders and haunches. This makes it akin to similar figures found in Hither Asia. The arching branches of its antlers are ingeniously modelled in a geometrical pattern of birds' necks and heads.

22. The Treasure of Vulchetrun, a village near Pleven, thirteenth to eleventh century B. C., is the biggest and most ancient of Thracian treasures. The simplicity and rhythmical flow of ornamental patterns reveal an artist possessing a subtle feeling for working metal. The gold lids are ornamented in silver and have a bronze pad beneath the handle, while the handle of the triple vessel is wrought in electrum (silver and gold).

23. Silver headstall of a horse from the village of Sveshtari near Shoumen, fifth century B. C., with typical animal decoration: a bird's tail, a human head, a lion's head and two birds. It is far more intricate in design than similar objects, found in Southern Russia, and is closer to the Persian way of depicting birds and lion's heads.

Silver ornaments from the town of Panagyurishte, dated to the middle or the end of the fourth century B. C.

24. The borders of smaller and larger beads and the rosette placed between two mythical animals in a stylized design are typical of Asiatic art. The Greek images of Heracles with the Nemean lion and a siren in profile, with the chest facing us and the eye drawn in full length, are wholly influenced by Persian art. The craftsman who made this ornament has therefore depicted the figures wearing garments.

25. An image of Heracles fighting the Nemean lion; depicted on the belt of a horse's trappings; probably made in a Greek colony in Thrace. Its style is in full contrast to that used in the ornamentation of the shield.

26. An ornament on the same shield (24) depicting animals, by a Thracian artist following the patterns and themes of decoration peculiar to Persian relics of a similar kind, i. e. plant and animal ornaments around an umbo.

27. Silver ornament probably worn on a cuirass from the Big Mound at Douvanli, mid fifth century B. C., the work of a Greek craftsman, depicting the Goddess of Victory, Nike, in a *quadriga*.

28. Gold pectoral found in the tomb of a Thracian princess at the Moushovitsa Mound, Douvanli, late sixth century B. C. It was fastened to the garment on the breast by means of two *fibulae*. Its only decoration — a border of birds — is also found in specimens of Oriental toreu-

tics. The pectoral is the work of a Thracian master craftsman.

29. A man's gold pectoral from the Bashova burial mound at Douvanli, fifth century B.C., ornamented with a lion. The Thracian artist made use of a number of the elements characteristic of Persian art: parallel folds along the cheeks, geometrically stylized mane and a stylized deltoid muscle in the shape of two circles. This was apparently the work of a less skilful Thracian goldsmith.

30–31. Fragment of a silver gilt belt, from the village of Lovets near Stara Zagora, fifth to fourth century B.C. It is a reproduction in the typical style of the local artists of a widespread Eastern motif — a succession of groups of a hunted boar, a rider and an archer, symmetrically placed around a plant ornament. The archer's figure betrays a coarser art, following all the details of the Oriental original.

32. Silver plaque of a horse's trappings from the Loukovit treasure, second half of the fourth century B.C. Swastika ornamented with a griffin's head.

33. Silver plaque of a horse's trappings from the town of Vratsa, first half of the fourth century B.C., decorated with highly stylized animal heads and one whole figure of an animal.

34. Bronze matrix from the village of Gurchinovo near Shoumen, probably fifth century B.C. It is decorated with two friezes of highly stylized animals. The antlers of the stag and the griffin in the upper frieze are decorated with animals' and birds' heads and their shoulders are modelled in the shape of large birds' heads, reproducing the rule of the Achaemenian figure eight used in stylizing the shoulder in Persian art. It is an exquisite piece of work by a Thracian artist.

35. Bronze helmet from Kovachevtsi, a village near Gotsé Delchev (Nevrokop), fourth century B.C. This type of helmet was also widespread in Asia Minor. It has cheek-guards which are fastened to it and are ornamented with tufts of hair, depicting a beard and moustache. It is interesting as an attempt at portraying a man's face in the history of Thracian sculpture. The way of picturing the beard by a mass of spiral curls is borrowed from Oriental sculpture.

36. A silver *phalera* from a horse's trappings; belonging to the treasure found at Letnitsa, a village near Lovech; mid-fourth century B.C. A *hierogram*, the sacred marriage of a Thracian deity and a Thracian goddess, is depicted in a rather naturalistic manner. A second woman, hold-

ing a twig and a vase, is also present at the scene. The way the god's hair is combed is of particular interest. The eyes of all the three figures are drawn in full length, and the women's busts are marked by two circles each.

37. A silver plaque from a horse's trappings belonging to the treasure found at Letnitsa, a village near Lovech, mid-fourth century B.C. A fight between a lion, a griffin and two snakes is portrayed. The images are treated with great artistry, but include a number of stylized features: the lion's mane and the griffin's wings and mane.

38. Silver greave from Vratsa, early fifth century B.C. The upper part is decorated with the head of a woman wearing a gilt wreath of ivy on her head. Gilt stripes are incised on one side of her face and her long hair is gradually shaped at the neck into the figures of two lions, and two snakes with lion's heads creep out of a snail's shell from below. Two other griffin-headed snakes, attacked by a bird, are depicted on the lower part of the greave. It is decorated on the one side by a large bird's wing. All the images, and especially the lion's and griffin's heads, show a number of features taken from Achaemenian art: the head seen from above, stylized folds on the cheeks and a sickle denoting the line of the mane behind the cheek.

39. A gold wreath from the Mogilanska Mound in Vratsa, of a kind that was widespread in Macedonia, the Greek Islands, Asia Minor and the South of Russia. They were worn throughout the Eastern world in the fifth and fourth century B.C.

40. Image of Apollo in a winged chariot on a small gold pitcher from Vratsa, early fourth century B.C. (See 41).

41. A small gold pitcher from the Mogilanska Mound in Vratsa, early fourth century. Its handle is modelled in the shape of a Herculean knot and the two sides are decorated with a *quadriga* driven by Apollo. It is a naive reproduction of the image of the Greek god (See 40).

GREEK ART IN THRACE AND THE GREEK COLONIES ALONG THE THRACIAN COAST

Greek art penetrated into ancient Thrace through its imported monuments which, in the course of time,

became widespread in this region. First among these come the products of Greek painted pottery, produced in big workshops in the centres of the Greek world. These vessels were initially imported to meet the needs of the rich citizens of the Greek colonies and the cities which they had colonized along the Thracian coast. Thus, from the end of the sixth century B. C. they found their way into the households of the wealthy Thracian families. Some of this pottery, noted for its exquisite forms, is coated with black varnish, whereas other vases are distinguished for the interesting ornaments and entire scenes painted on them, executed in black varnish on a white slip. Political and economic developments at the end of the sixth century B. C. made it possible for the big Athenian potteries to displace all others and become the main suppliers of luxurious painted pottery to the whole of Thrace.

Some of the vases imported into Thrace are the work of great masters and are magnificently ornamented. They are therefore of considerable interest in the study of Greek painting.

The Greek colonists brought to the Thracian household the kind of decoration and painting which adorned the houses of the rich, the palaces and the sumptuous tombs in their own land. The painting of this period is almost unknown in Greece today as only fragments of it have survived. This is what makes the wall paintings of the Kazanluk tomb so valuable. The tomb is one of the largest monuments of the early third century B. C. in existence. In a beehive tomb, which is purely Thracian in architectural design, the antique artist has painted a large composition, fully preserved to this day, following in detail the style of Greek painting from the first or even the second quarter of the third century B. C.

The other route, along which Greek art penetrated into the present-day territory of Bulgaria, passed once again through the settlements of the Greek colonists. They built temples in their cities, adorned them with statues of their gods, and left behind a great many tombstones and statues, and lastly big and small statues, made of baked clay — the so-called terracottas. In the sculpture of the period, beginning with the late seventh and the sixth

centuries B. C., when the old traditions carried over by the colonists were still alive, only the art brought over from the Greek islands and from Asia Minor, the places which the Greek colonists actually came from, was considered to be real art. Unfortunately, however, the monuments which have survived from this early period of Greek art on the Thracian coast are few in number. The prosperity of the Greek colonies and of the whole of Thrace coincided with the period of the supremacy of Athens which exercised a tremendous influence on the Greek cities, scattered up and down the vast outlying territory. Throughout the fifth and fourth centuries B. C. the local artists in all the Greek colonies only reproduced the subjects and designs which originated in Attica, and traces of Ionian art are discernible in the works of the earliest period alone. (It is noted for its wonderful artistic qualities and its mellowness — qualities which began to disappear from the middle of the fifth century B. C.) This was also the case with the terracottas. Although they were rare, there were some terracotta pieces among the products of the Greek artists of the fifth and sixth century B. C. made in a markedly Graeco-Persian style. The toreutics and jewellery of the Greek colonies also display a number of forms, motifs and even complete ornaments typical of Persian art. In this way the Greek artist tried to meet the taste and requirements of the Thracians for whom the luxurious silver and gold vessels were mainly intended.

Ordinary painted pottery, coated with black varnish, produced in Athens and transported to Sozopol in the fourth century B. C.:

42. *Kylix*

43. *Jug*

Attic pottery, fifth century B. C., found in Sozopol:

44. Little pitcher modelled in the shape of an Amazon's head.

45. *Lekythos* with ornaments painted in black varnish

46. Attic *krater*, second quarter of the fourth century B. C., decorated with figures of the deities who formed the retinue of Dionysos: Dionysos himself, Pan, Eros, two Bacchantes and a satyr.

47. Attic *krater*, mid-fourth century B. C., from Vratsa. It is ornamented with a painting of the statue of Nike, the goddess of victory, flanked by a horseman and a seated woman.

48. Attic *lekythos*, late fifth century B. C., from Varna, with the image of the god of love, Eros, descending on an altar, lyre in hand.

49 and 50. Brazier made of baked clay from Sozopol, fourth century B. C., with three heads of sileni modelled in relief on the base.

51. Lid of an Attic vessel in baked clay from Sozopol, second half of the fifth century B. C. It is ornamented with scenes depicting women engaged in domestic chores.

52. Attic *krater* from Sozopol, fifth century B. C. A warrior standing between two women is painted on the bowl.

53. Archaic Greek vase from Sozopol, early fifth century B. C. A siren is painted on the lower part and a bird flanked by two human figures on the upper part of the vase.

Two Ionian vases found at Sozopol, late sixth or early fifth century B. C.

54. Black-figure vase with the image of a bull under a tree.

55. *Amphora* from the island of Phikeloura near Rhodes.

56. The Kazanluk tomb built in the outskirts of Seuthopolis near the present-day town of Kazanluk, in the early third century B. C. A square antechamber and a narrow passage ornamented with murals lead to a round, domed room. Two friezes are painted one above the other around the dome. The lower frieze depicts an Oriental theme in the characteristic style of third century Greek painting: a procession of people bearing funeral gifts which they offer to a seated young woman. It also includes two women musicians, the horses and grooms of the deceased and his charioteer with his chariot. It is the only complete monument of this epoch of Greek painting not only in Thrace but in the whole of the Balkan Peninsula.

57. The central composition of the murals in the Kazanluk tomb — a Thracian prince seated on a couch and his wife, seated on a throne. Both have gold wreaths on their heads and before them is placed a table laden with food and fruit. The man and wife have joined hands in farewell. The man is holding a *phiale*.

58. Stele of Anaxander from Sozopol, first quarter of the fifth century B. C. A man is carved on it leaning on his staff and holding out a sheep's leg to his dog — an Attic theme of the last decades of the sixth and the early fifth centuries B. C., the work of an outstanding Ionian artist. It is noted for the softness and grace of line characteristic of Ionian art of that time. The monument was originally two-sided. The face on the reverse was chiselled later, when this monument was used as building material.

59. Tombstone of Kalikrita from Nessebur, early fourth century B. C. A purely Attic subject popular in Athens, in the late fifth and fourth centuries B. C.; it spread from this city to the colonies on the Black Sea coast. From all its artistic qualities this tombstone differs from the originals it followed in its somewhat crude workmanship and the lack of connection between the two figures — that of Kalikrita, holding in her arms a baby which she is amusing with a bird, and of the servant standing beside her and holding out a vase.

60. Tombstone found at Shapla Deré at the mouth of the River Maritsa, third quarter of the fifth century B. C. It originally ornamented a big tomb. A procession of a cart and driver and a traveller, preceded by a horseman is carved on it. The subject is unknown in Greek art, but is widespread in the East in many different variants. This remarkable work is noted for the abstract quality in the representation of the figures of men and beasts, a quality characteristic of Eastern art. The eyes, shown in full length, also indicate Oriental influence. This tombstone belongs to the group of monuments in which a merging of Greek and Persian art is discernible.

61. A tombstone from Varna, fourth century B. C. It is another variant of the Attic tombstone of that time, depicting a woman seated in a chair with a basket in front of her and a maid-servant standing before her, and handing her an object.

62. Terracotta from Sozopol depicting a goddess seated on a throne; second half of the sixth century B. C.

63. Terracotta from Sozopol, fifth century B. C., with a curious apotropaic figure intended to stave off evil.

64. Terracotta from Sozopol with an image of Silenus, 450–430 B. C.

65. A clay pot from Varna, fourth century B. C., with an image of Silenus reclining on a wine-skin.

66. A clay vase from Sozopol, mid-sixth century B. C., with the image of a siren.

67. A silver *phiale* from the Big Mound at Douvanli, mid-fifth century B. C. There are plant ornaments around the umbo in the centre, around which are engraved chariots in which a driver and a warrior are driving. It is a perfect specimen of Attic toreutics.

68. Decoration of a bronze *hydria* from Nessebur, mid-fifth century B. C. The vessel was used as a funeral urn and is ornamented with a scene depicting the rape of the nymph Oreithyia by Boreas, the North Wind. The subject is typical of the art of the Eastern Greek world.

69. Image of Dionysos and a satyr on a bronze *hydria* which served as an urn, mid-fourth century B. C. Probably Attic.

70. Bronze statue of a dancing satyr, from the Mal Tepé tomb near the village of Mezek, Švilengrad district, about 350 B. C. It was part of a large bronze chandelier. The satyr holds a large flower in his hand.

71. Persian silver *amphora* from Koukouva Mogila (Mound) at the village of Douvanli, first quarter of the fifth century B. C., found in the tomb of a Thracian princess. Its handles, in the form of monsters with their hind legs resting on a high tambour, have all the features of the strongly stylized Achaemenian art. The body of the *amphora* is decorated with an ornament typical of this art: alternating palmettes and lotus leaves in garlands.

72. Pair of gold ear-rings from the Mogilanska Mogila in Vratsa, early fourth century B. C., a perfect work of the Greek jeweller's art, of a type widespread in Southern Russia. Heavily decorated with plant ornaments, they also carry the image of a siren each and are a typical example of ornate filigree jewellery.

Gold ornaments, from Nessebur, third century B. C.:

73. A ring in the shape of a dragon, of filigree work decorated with precious stones. Similar jewellery has been found in Thessaly.

74. Gold figure of a siren.

75. Gold ear-rings from Nessebur, third century B. C. Perfect products of the goldsmith's art, made of filigree. The open ring of the ear-ring ends in the protome of a Pegasus (a winged horse). A pendant in the shape of an *amphorisca* is suspended from each ear-ring.

76. Silver *phalera* from the Big Mound near the village of Douvanli, mid-fifth century B. C., in the shape of a Gorgon's head with its tongue lolling out.

77. Gold treasure from the town of Panagyurishtë, first quarter of the third century B. C., made in the town

of Lampsakus on the shore of the Dardanelles. It consists of an *amphora-rhyton*, seven *rhyta* and a *phiale* all made of gold.

78. Gold *phiale* from the Panagyurishtë treasure, decorated with rows of Negroes' heads and plant ornaments, a typical example of Greek toreutics along the shores of the Sea of Marmara.

79. Gold *amphora* from the Panagyurishtë treasure, converted into a drinking vessel by means of two little apertures inserted in the mouths of two lions' heads. The shape of the vessel is Persian, whereas the ornamentation is Greek; it shows two heroes talking to each other and five warriors attacking a palace. The composition encircles the vase. A typical example of the mixed art of the Eastern Greek world, which borrowed elements from Persian toreutics and combined them with elements of Greek art.

80. A gold rhyton from the Panagyurishtë treasure, early third century B. C. The mouth of the rhyton is decorated with figures of Greek deities and the bottom part is formed by the *protome* of a goat; the influence of Oriental art is strongly felt in the treatment of the animal's figure.

81. Stone fire-dog from the village of Dorkovo, Pazardjik district, in the shape of a horse covered with geometric ornaments and figures: a work of Thracian art belonging to the period following the advent of the Celts in the third century B. C. The figure and ornaments are not characteristic of earlier Thracian art and are attributed to Celtic craftsmen.

82. Stone fire-dog in the shape of a ram from the village of Dorkovo, Pazardjik district, third century B. C. The lower part is decorated with an egg-shaped ornament typical of Greek art, alternating with a *cyma*. Celtic art.

83. Stone fire-dog in the shape of a horse from Pazardjik district, third century B. C.

84. Marble relief from Balchik, third century B. C., representing dancing women. A fine if severely damaged work of Hellenistic art.

85. Tombstone from Nessebur, 3rd century B. C., with the figures of a teacher and a pupil.

86. A votive monument to Hecate from Nessebur, second century B. C. This Greek goddess of death, often represented with three heads and three bodies, has in this monument three identical images, emerging from a single column. The goddess is holding a torch and a vase in her hands.

87. Marble images of Adonis and Aphrodite from Varna,

first century B. C., a fine work of Hellenistic art, reproducing types first created by Praxiteles. Between the two deities is Eros, the god of love, whose head is broken off.

Terracottas of the Hellenistic period from Varna. The figures are strikingly realistic.

88. A woman dancer with castanets.

89. A woman.

90 and 91. Fourth century B. C. terracottas from Varna. Figures of women treated realistically.

92. Fourth century B. C. terracotta from Nessebur. A theatrical mask.

93. Terracotta from Sozopol, fourth or early third century B. C., probably representing an actor in the role of a silenus.

94. Torso of a statue of Dionysos from Balchik, first century B. C., reproducing a type created by Praxiteles.

95 and 96. Images of Pan from Balchik and Varna. Here the deity, the constant companion of Dionysos, is seen as the god of wild Nature with the stress correspondingly laid on his animal features: goat's legs. In one image Pan is playing the syrinx, in the other he forms part of a larger sculptured group.

ROMAN ART IN THRACE

The most widespread monuments of the period of Roman domination in Thrace (from the time of the appearance of Roman garrisons on the banks of the Danube in the first half of the first century A.D. to the adoption of Christianity in the early fourth century) made by local masters, are mainly votive reliefs representing the deities worshipped by the Thracians or the conquerors who had come into their midst. They are often found in large numbers in the ruins of Thracian sanctuaries built at picturesque and isolated spots around springs, near mountain peaks or in their foothills. Up to 200 or 300 small reliefs are sometimes found around these sanctuaries, dedicated to the Thracians' home deity, bearing various names and usually represented as a horseman, galloping, riding at a leisurely pace or returning from

the hunt accompanied by a dog, lion or snake and attacking some kind of game: a boar, a doe, a stag or a goat. Sometimes he carries the game he has killed. No doubt this mysterious deity, which was not worshipped outside Thrace, is the same one that was represented as a horseman on various silver ornaments at an earlier age: fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Along with this universally worshipped Thracian deity (represented as holding a spear, a cornucopia, or a lyre), all the gods of the Greek and Roman pantheon are often represented on the Thracian votive reliefs. These are normally small, from 10 to 60 cm, and the deities represented on them are very seldom influenced by the great sculptural works of Antiquity. Original motifs are never found, either.

The making of tombstones is another sphere of art in that period. Whether he used conventional subjects or portraits of the dead, the local master was influenced by Roman art whose principles he followed, although in Thrace they were coloured by a Hellenistic influence, either obvious or more intangible.

The influence of Asia Minor on Thracian tombstones and votive reliefs is felt in the use of many subjects and motifs drawn from the development of Hellenistic art in the Orient during the Roman period. The figures of a seated woman, of a man recumbent on a bed, and of many deities on tombstones are very similar to tombstones in Asia Minor.

The works of the leading Greek masters of the earlier period, which decorated the houses and gardens of wealthy citizens throughout the Roman Empire, were reproduced in Thrace in small bronze or in life-size marble statues. These sculptural works often reproduce types which have not been found in other parts of the Roman Empire and which show that the Thracian master craftsmen or the master craftsmen working for Thrace had constant access to the monuments of the large and rich Greek sanctuaries in Greece proper, the Greek islands or the Greek cities along the coasts of Asia Minor and Thrace. A great number of older Greek works of art were thus copied with great precision by the master craftsmen of the Roman imperial period.

Sometimes, in their Roman copies, such great works of

the masters of an earlier period were used as ornaments on chariots, chairs, scales, chests, etc.

A strongly realistic trend in the art of portrait sculpture at the turn of the third and the fourth centuries is to be noted in the Silistra Tomb, the only well preserved monument of painting in Thrace at that time. While the artist has used the simplest means of expression in depicting the dead and their servants, he has painted their garments more elaborately, giving some interesting details. The most characteristic feature of the development of art during the Roman imperial period is its provincial touch, invariably expressed in a strong influence from Asia Minor.

97. Small marble statue of Heracles, from Vidin, second century. A copy of a great work of Roman art. The hero is represented seated and resting. The master has sculpted a body, arms and legs with prominent muscles, in an original manner that is not typical of Thracian figures.

98. Votive statuette of Aphrodite with a child on one shoulder: a motif known from the Hellenistic age.

99. Marble votive relief of the Phrygian goddess Cybele, found in Sofia, second to third century. The goddess is seated on a throne flanked by two lions, as she is usually represented.

100. Figure of Heracles from Plovdiv district, second to third century. In one hand (now broken off) the hero held a heavy club, while a lion's skin is thrown over the other arm.

101. Two-sided votive relief from Novo Selo, Sliven district, end of second or third century. The three nymphs with Zeus and Hera (now missing) beside them are depicted on one side. These three mysterious goddesses are often portrayed as the three *Charites* or graces (see 102).

102. The other side of the relief has an image of the Thracian hero-deity, holding a spear and a lyre and chasing a stag wounded by another deity that was on the other side of the relief. Behind the stag is a tree.

103. Man's torso, from the village of Gigen, second or third century.

104. Statue of Apollo with his hand resting on the tripod that usually accompanies portrayals of this god.

105. Tombstone depicting a winged genius of death,

third century. He is leaning on a staff and in one hand holds a fir-cone, one of the symbols of death in antique art.

106. Votive statue of Dionysos, accompanied by Pan, a satyr and a panther, from Sofia, probably third century. The drunken deities of this god's retinue are often depicted in such compositions.

Bronze statuettes of the second and third centuries:

107. Hermes (Mercury), from Razgrad, holding a purse in one hand and a *caduceus* in the other.

108. Bronze statuette of Aphrodite (Venus), origin unknown.

109. Bronze fastener of a chest in the form of a statuette of the Phrygian god Atys, from the village of Hursovo, Razgrad district.

110. Bronze statuette of Zeus, from Razgrad.

111. Bronze statuette of a dying Amazon, forming part of the decoration of a chariot, from the village of Mogilovo, Stara Zagora district, probably third century. The dying Amazon depicted here differs from all other known types in that the horse is down on its forelegs and haunches and the Amazon herself has fallen along the animal's back.

112. Second century bronze statuette of Ares (Mars), the war god, found near Nicopolis ad Istrum. The statuette reproduces an older work of Greek art. The cuirass and greaves of the god are decorated with griffins and other ornaments made of silver.

113. Second or third century bronze chest fastener, decorated with a figure of Atys, the Phrygian god of pastoral life, worshipped together with Cybele. Atys is wearing a Thracian helmet, playing a syrinx and holding a staff in his hand.

114. Bronze hand, probably a votive offering, decorated with a figure of the god Zeus Dolichenus worshipped in the Orient. A bull is to be seen behind his torso, and the god holds a double axe in his hand. Two fingers of the hand hold a little ball on which stands Nike, the goddess of victory.

115. Votive relief of Mithras from Kourtovo Konaré, first to third century. Mithras was an Oriental god, the worship of whom was introduced into Thrace by soldiers from Iran. The god is represented with a Phrygian hat, killing a bull that has fallen at his feet. Around this group are several scenes representing other aspects of the life of the deity.

116. Third century votive relief of the Roman god Sylvanus, from Plovdiv district.

117. Relief of the three nymphs from the sanctuary near the village of Maritsa, Pazardjik district, probably late second century. They are Thracian goddesses, worshipped at springs and portrayed as the three graces, dancing, one usually with her back to the viewer.

118. Figure of a mysterious goddess, an executioner, found near Assenovgrad. This is the only monument on which she appears. Holding a knife in one hand, and a head in the other, she is treading on the decapitated body of a woman. A number of women's heads are arranged on both sides of her.

119. Votive tablet from the village of Kaspichan, Shoumen district, probably second century, representing the Thracian hero-god. Usually the deity is depicted as a hunter. Here he is holding a cornucopia instead of the usual spear. The horse has one foreleg on an altar, before which is a boar attacked by a hound.

120. Third century votive tablet with the image of the Thracian hero-god, origin unknown. The god is usually portrayed as a horseman, most frequently a hunter. On this tablet, the hero is carrying a doe he has killed, with several hounds and a lion leaping at it. Ahead of him two women are paying tribute to him, while his servant is running after him, holding onto the horse's tail. Behind his flying cloak a small horseman, obviously the antithesis of this god of nature reborn, is seen passing in the opposite direction.

121. A votive tablet of Artemis, the goddess of hunting and virginity, from the village of Vulchedrum, Lom district, second or third century.

122. Votive tablet of the Greek gods Zeus and Hera, from the village of Kopilovtsi, Kyustendil district, late second or third century. The worship of these gods was widespread in Thrace during the Roman imperial period.

123. Votive tablet of the gods Dionysos and Heracles, in a chariot driven by Pan; found in Plovdiv district, second or third century. Panthers with their forepaws on a sacrificial altar are harnessed to the chariot. There are several wine-making scenes beneath the lower frame of the relief. The two deities are conceived as patrons of fertility.

124. Third century votive tablet of Dionysos from Shoumen district. The god of wine and ecstasy is flanked by a satyr and by a silenus against the background of a vine.

125. Third century bronze votive tablet of Sabasius,

from Razgrad. In accordance with Thracian conceptions, Sabasius is depicted as a horseman wearing a Phrygian hat. In front of him a man is sacrificing a boar, attacked by a snake. On each side of the group a woman is floating in the air. The cult of Sabasius penetrated into Bulgaria from the East in Antiquity.

126. Tombstone, site unknown. Symbolical figurines are placed in its *acroteria*. Beneath them are the two deceased, represented as two heroes on horseback. Under them are the portraits of the deceased with their relatives. The scene is highly stylized.

127. Tombstone from the village of Tatarevo, Haskovo district. The scene represents a trainer of gladiators supervising a fight between a lightly armed and a heavily armed gladiator; a water organ played by two slaves, marks time for them.

Portraits on steles are very widespread in Western Bulgaria; they penetrated into the region up the valley of the River Strouma from Macedonia:

128. From the village of Prossochani, Drama district, in Greece.

129. From the village of Vrania, Blagoevgrad district.

130. From the village of Laskarevo, near Sandanski.

131. From the surroundings of the town of Sandanski.

132. A stele from Varna, second century, with a symbolic scene of a funeral feast. The dead man is lying on a couch, in front of which is a three-legged table with food and fruit, his wife is seated in a chair and his daughter is standing, while little servants bring gifts.

133. A stele from the village of Bulgarevo, Bourgas district, end of the second century or third century. The dead man is represented as a hero-horseman riding towards an altar. Behind the altar is a tree around which a serpent is coiled. The subject is conventional.

134. Second century stele from Varna, with a conventionally treated scene of a funeral feast: a man recumbent on a bed and a woman seated in a chair and holding a child. The figures of two small servants make up the scene.

135 and 136. A stele from the valley of the River Strouma. A scene representing a man and a woman offering a sacrifice on an altar. Above them is Victoria, the goddess of victory, and beneath them are portraits.

137. Second century sarcophagus from the village of Archar. Around the figure in relief of a hero horseman,

Cupids and atlantes are carrying a garland, the surface around which is decorated with masks.

138 and 139. Two of the masks on the same sarcophagus. *Roman portraits of the late third century, naturalistically rendered:*

140. A man's head from Brest, Pleven district.

141. A man's head from Marcianopolis (now Devnya).

142. Bronze head of the young Roman Emperor Gordianus III (234–238). The head itself was cast while details of the hair and eyebrows were engraved afterwards.

143. Marble head of a woman, part of a statue on a tomb from an unknown site. Second century.

144. A man's statue on a tomb, unknown site. Second century.

145. Early second century bronze head of a statue, a sculptured portrait on a tomb, from Vidin.

146. Second century head of Apollo, made of bronze and gilt, from Sofia, reproducing an outstanding work of art by a Greek master who lived in the late fourth or third century B.C.

Bronze statuettes from the Roman imperial period, reproducing distinguished works by earlier Greek masters:

147. Apollo, from Stara Zagora, reproducing a statue of the school of Praxiteles, fourth century B.C.

148. Athene, from the village of Meshtitsa, Kyustendil district, reproducing the famous Athene by Myron, fifth century B.C.

149. Heracles, from Berkovitsa, reproducing a Hellenistic type of the hero.

150. Apollo, from Yambol, part of a chariot ornament, reproducing a statue seen on the coins of Antigonos Gonatos. Third century B.C.

151. Athene or Ares (Mars) from Philippi, in South-eastern Macedonia.

Second century Roman statues, reproducing works by Praxiteles:

152. Eros (Cupid)

153. Satyr, resting.

Two second century Roman statuettes from the village of Mihalich, Svilengrad district:

154. Athene

155. Apollo

156. A second century head of Heracles, from Orlandovtsi (Sofia), a marble Roman copy of the famous fourth century B.C. statue of Heracles by Scopas.

157. Second century headless statue of a goddess, from the village of Gigen, near Nikopol, double life size. The statue is a Roman copy of a Greek sculpture by one of the great masters of the fifth or fourth century B.C.

158. A second or third century Roman sundial, with an image of Orpheus singing and accompanying himself on a lyre, his singing casting a spell on animals and on all Nature. On two flanking columns are sculptures of the sun and the moon, symbolic representations of the day and night.

159. In the early period of Roman domination combined helmets and masks made of bronze were widely used as part of an officer's dress uniform. The helmet and mask from the town of Silistra (end of the first century B.C.) has the features of Roman art which was strongly influenced by Greek art at that time.

160. The helmet and mask from the town of Plovdiv, end of the first century, is the mask of a face with Oriental features. Such masks are believed to be an attempt to represent a human face with portrait features. Sculpture in Bulgaria, as everywhere in antiquity, was widely used in architecture during the Roman period.

161. Fragment of a stone coffered ceiling from the village of Gigen, near Nikopol. Second century.

162. Figure of a lion, probably from the *acroterion* of a building. From the town of Razgrad, third century.

163. Capital, origin unknown, second century.

164. Cornice from the temple of Fortuna, from the village of Gigen, near Nikopol, second century.

165. Sculpture in Bulgaria during the Roman imperial period was used for the most diverse purposes: a circus poster of the late third century. In *ediculae* on the left, it has reliefs of Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty, and Cybele, probably as goddess of wild beasts, and on the rest of the surface, circus actors, with or without masks, fighting animals, or fights between animals.

166. A chariot ornament from the village of Mogilevo, Stara Zagora district, late second century, a type of Heracles widespread during the Roman imperial period, with a lion skin thrown over his head and the apples of the Hesperides in his hands.

167. Athene, of unknown origin, a bust that served as a weight for a pair of old Roman scales from the time of Constantine the Great, end of the third and early fourth century.

168. Bust of a satyr, from Kyustendil, first century, a vessel used by athletes as a container for the oil with which they rubbed themselves during contests.

169. Bust of a silenus, a small oil vessel from the village of Vurbovka, near Sevlievo, end of second and early third century.

170. Buckle from a horse's chariot harness, from Yambol, end of the third century, with figures of lions and masks of Bacchantes.

171. A Roman bronze dress helmet with the image of Scylla, from Sofia, third century.

172. Bust of a maenad, from Yambol, end of the third century, a chariot ornament.

173. The Silistra Tomb, late third century, known for its strikingly realistic painting. The central scene shows a man and a woman: the dead in whose honour the tomb was built, while the other scenes depict servants bringing various gifts.

174, 175 and 176. Details of the Silistra Tomb (cf. 173), showing servants carrying the dead man's garments and gifts.

ANTIQUÉ MINTING IN BULGARIA

Bulgaria is exceptionally rich in old coins. Every year hoards of various coins that were in circulation in these lands in Antiquity come to light. Many of them were minted in the Greek towns along the Thracian coast, while others are coins of the Thracian and the Macedonian kings. Naturally, coins of the Roman Republic and Empire, and of all the cities of the Roman imperial period, are to be found in Bulgaria just as in the rest of Europe.

Among the oldest and heaviest silver coins that are worth mentioning are those minted by the Macedonian tribe of Deroni; these coins are some of the rarest in the world; so are the coins minted by their neighbours along the lower reaches of the River Strouma, featuring a satyr

and a maenad. The coins of the Macedonian rulers are widespread in Thrace. Some of them, dated to the time of Alexander the Great and Lysimachus, are highly artistic.

177 and 178. Bronze coin of the Thracian ruler Seuthes III, late fourth and early third century B.C. Obverse: a head of Seuthes; reverse: Seuthes on horseback.

179 and 180. Silver coin from Apollonia, featuring a Gorgon. Silver coin from Apollonia, featuring an anchor, fifth to fourth century B.C.

181. Silver coin of the Deroni; on the obverse — a carter in a cart drawn by a bull. The carter is wearing a wide-brimmed hat typical of the Macedonians. Above him is a solar disk. Minted at the end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth century B.C.

182. Silver coin from the first half of the fifth century B.C. minted by the Thracian tribes along the lower reaches of the River Strouma. The obverse shows a satyr abducting a maenad.

183. Silver tetradrachm of the Macedonian ruler Antigonos Gonatos (277–239 B.C.). The reverse represents Apollo sitting on the prow of a ship, a highly artistic image.

184. The reverse of a coin of Lysimachus (323–280 B.C.), featuring the goddess Athene, helmeted, with a shield beside her, seated and holding in one hand Nike, the goddess of victory.

185. A silver tetradrachm of Antigonos Gonatos (cf. 183). The obverse features the ruler.

186 and 188. The obverse and reverse of a coin struck by Lysimachus. The obverse represents Alexander the Great and the reverse, the goddess Athene.

187. The reverse of a coin of Alexander the Great (335–323 B.C.) showing Zeus seated on a throne with an eagle on his hand.

During the second century B.C. the Thracians imitated the coins of the island of Thasos. The local craftsmen produced a whole series of different barbarized variants of those coins, which were originally of highly artistic workmanship:

189 and 190. The obverse of Thracian imitations of Thasos coins with a head of Dionysos.

191 and 192. Reverse of a coin showing Heracles and an imitated inscription which is illegible.

193 and 195. A silver tetradrachm of Maronea, a Greek colony on the coast of the Aegean Sea, fourth century B.C. Obverse: a man's head; reverse: a horse and a helmet.

194 and 196. A silver coin from Mesembria, fourth century B.C. Obverse: a woman's head; reverse: Athene.

197. The ancient Thracian towns built before and especially during the imperial period of Rome left many outstanding architectural monuments. The ruins of an amphitheatre in Nicopolis ad Istrum, at the village of Nikyup near the town of Veliko Turnovo. The town was founded by the Romans in the early years of the second century.

198. The recently discovered ruins of a large public building in Varna (the Odessos of Antiquity), second century. The building is believed to have served as baths or a gymnasium.

199. One of the gates of Hissar in south Bulgaria, a

well preserved fortress of the late Roman period, fourth century.

200. Ruins of the ancient town of Oescus, at the village of Gigen, near Nikopol, on the River Danube. The town, founded in the first century, was an important frontier post.

201. Many of the wealthy citizens lived in luxurious villas outside the towns in Antiquity. One such villa was excavated near Madara, a medieval Bulgarian settlement. It existed from the second to the beginning of the fifth century.

202. A rich man's house in the Roman town of Abrittus, second to third century.

203. The oldest fortress wall along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, in ancient Mesembria (today Nessebur), built at the end of the fifth century B.C.

204. A Roman mausoleum in Serdica (today Sofia), built at the end of the third century, later converted into a church, the Church of St George.



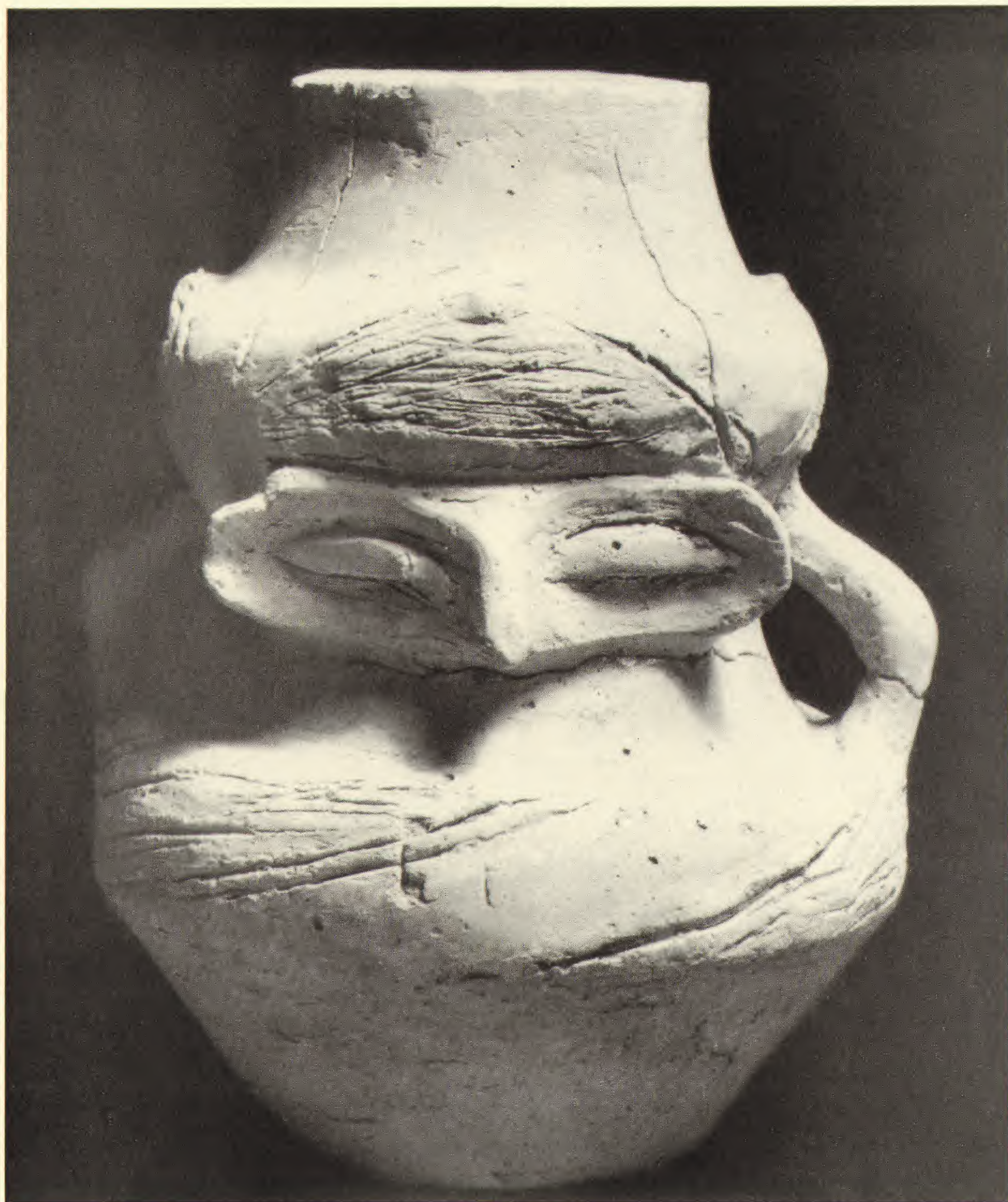




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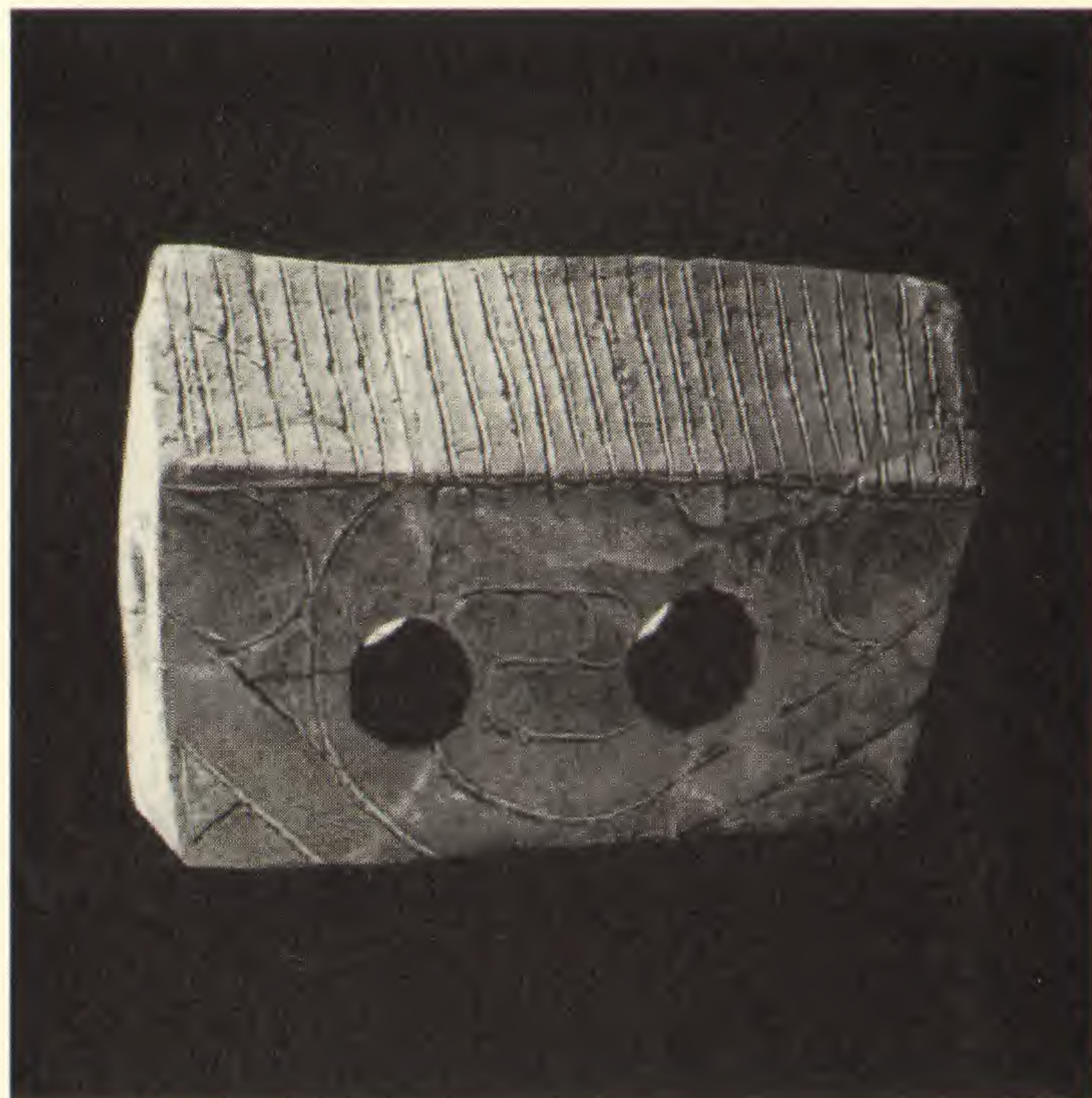




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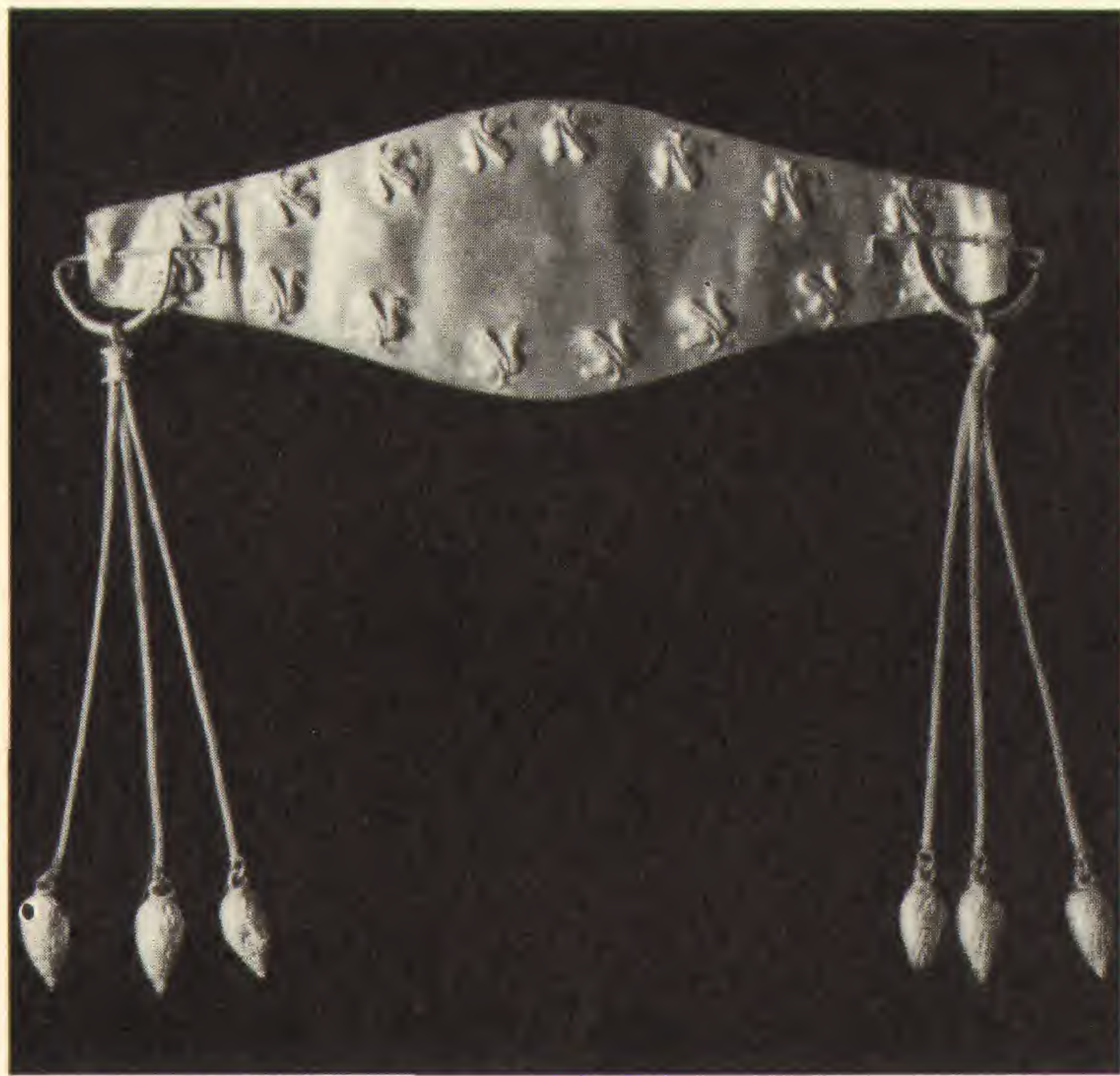










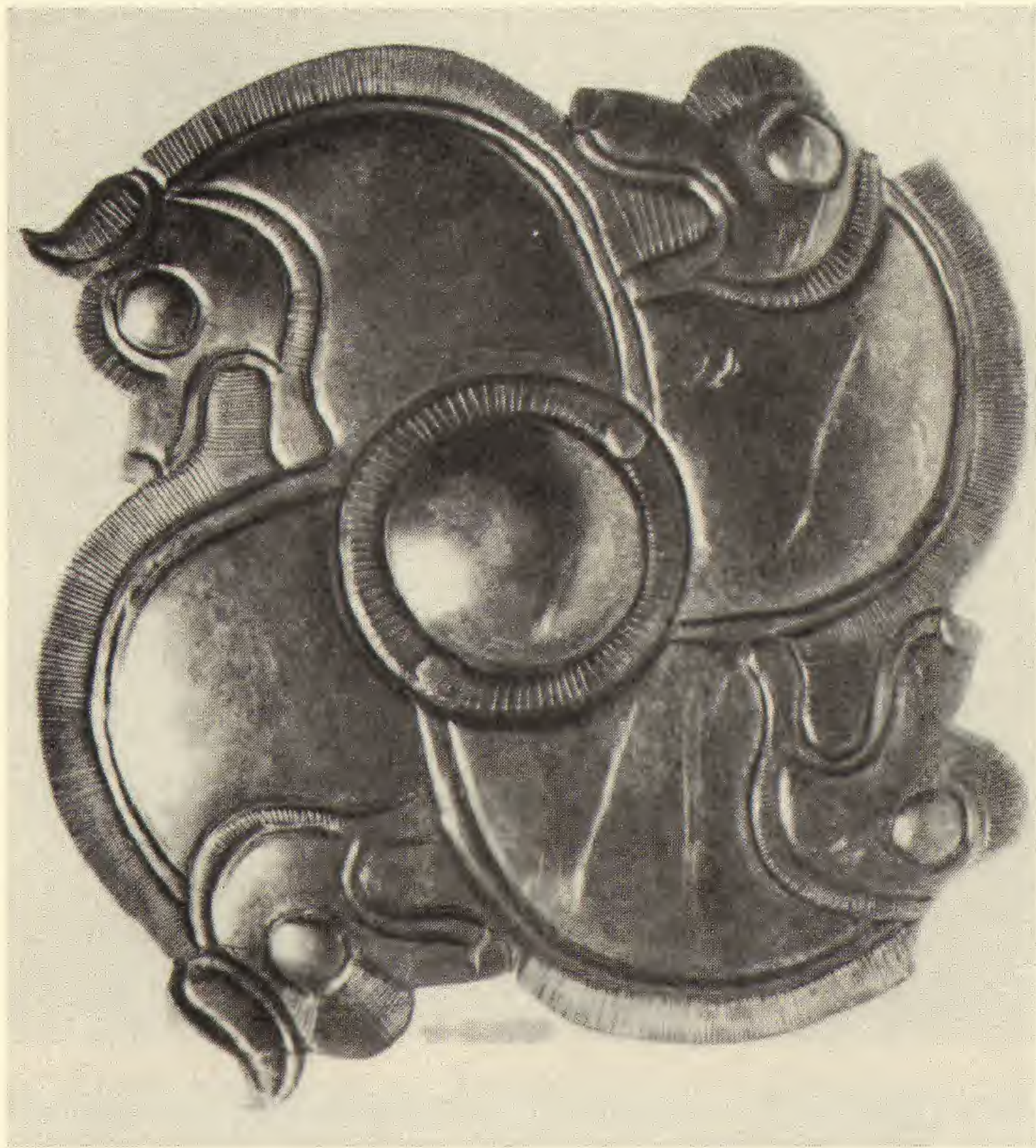


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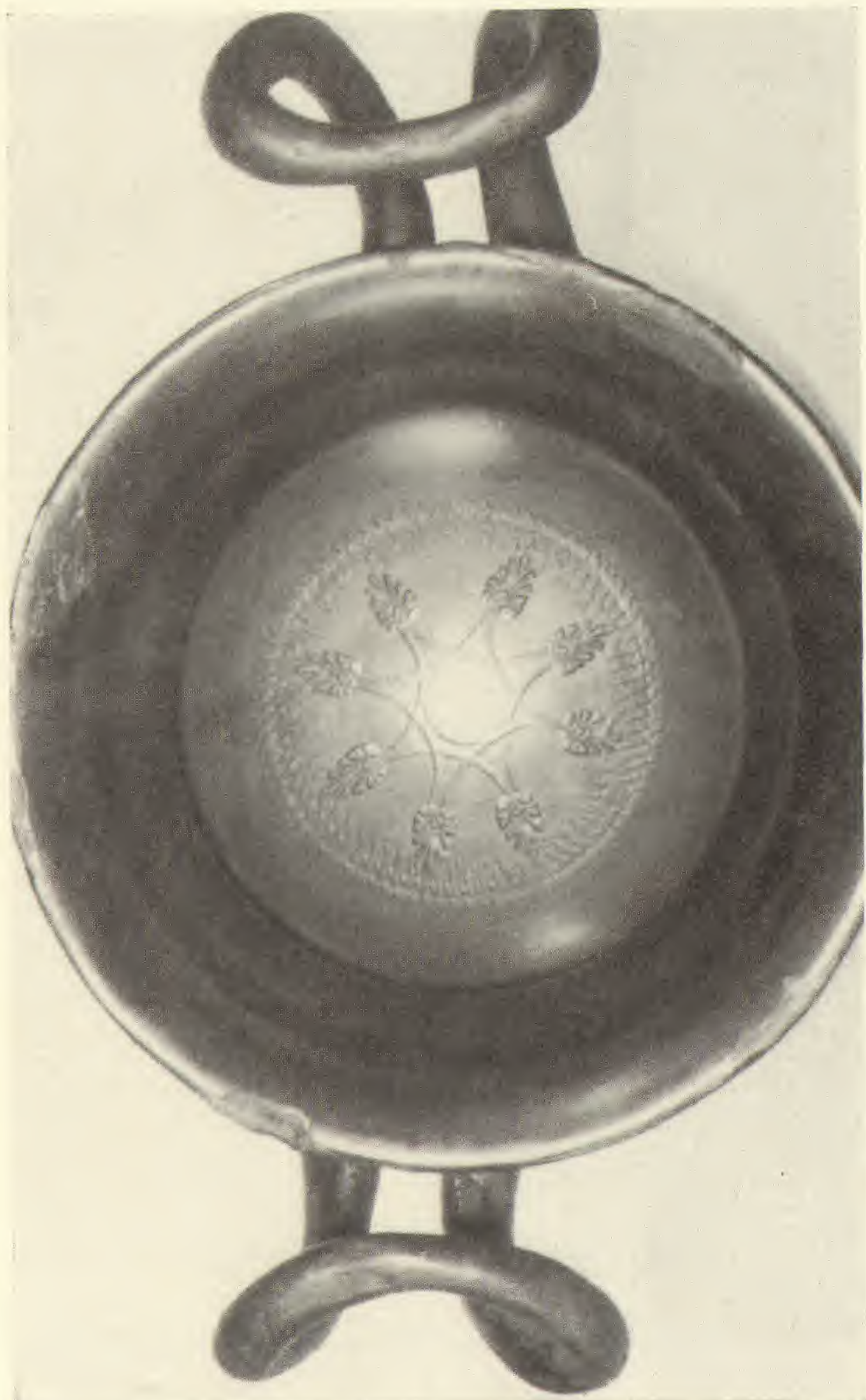
























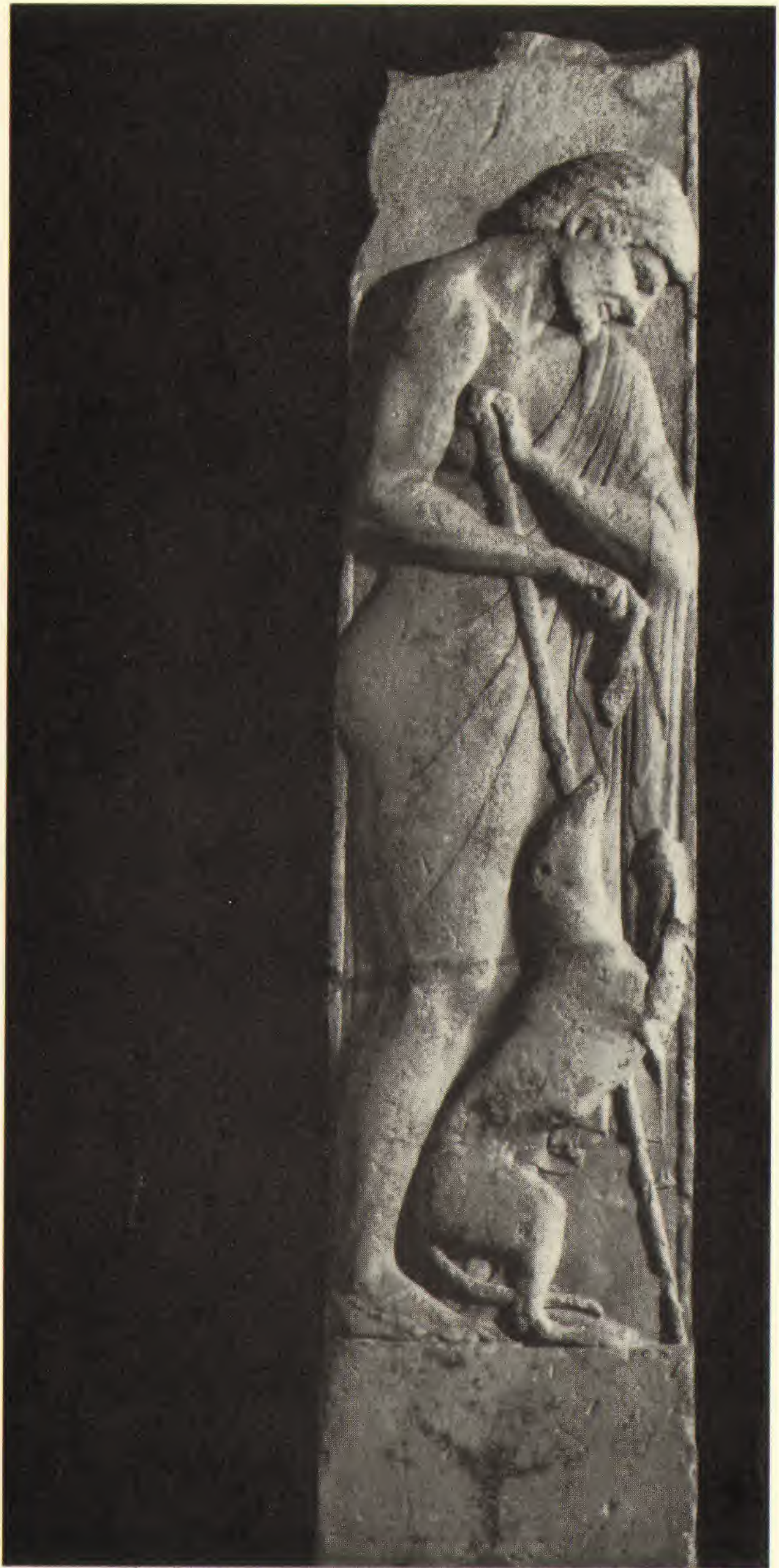








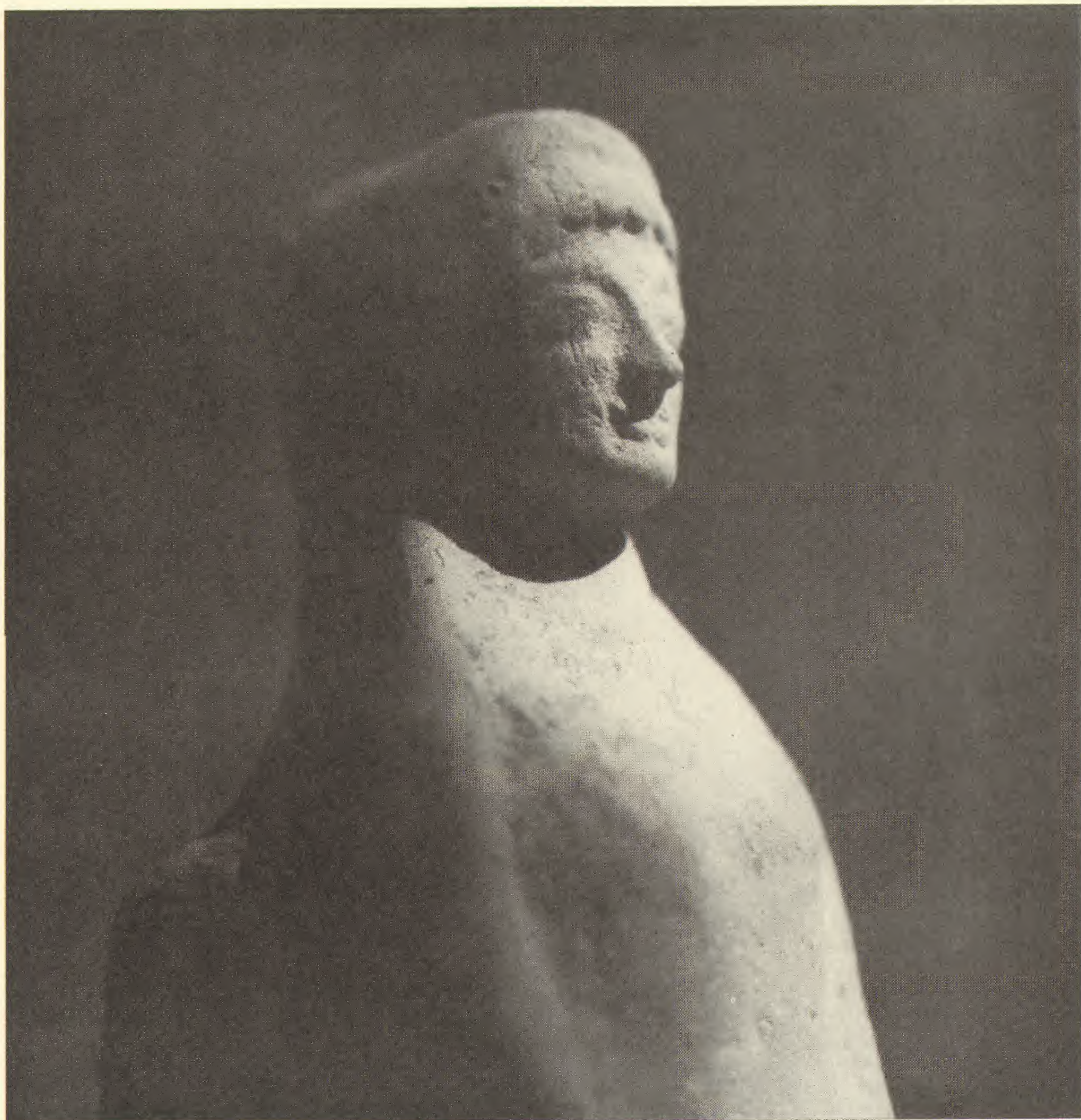


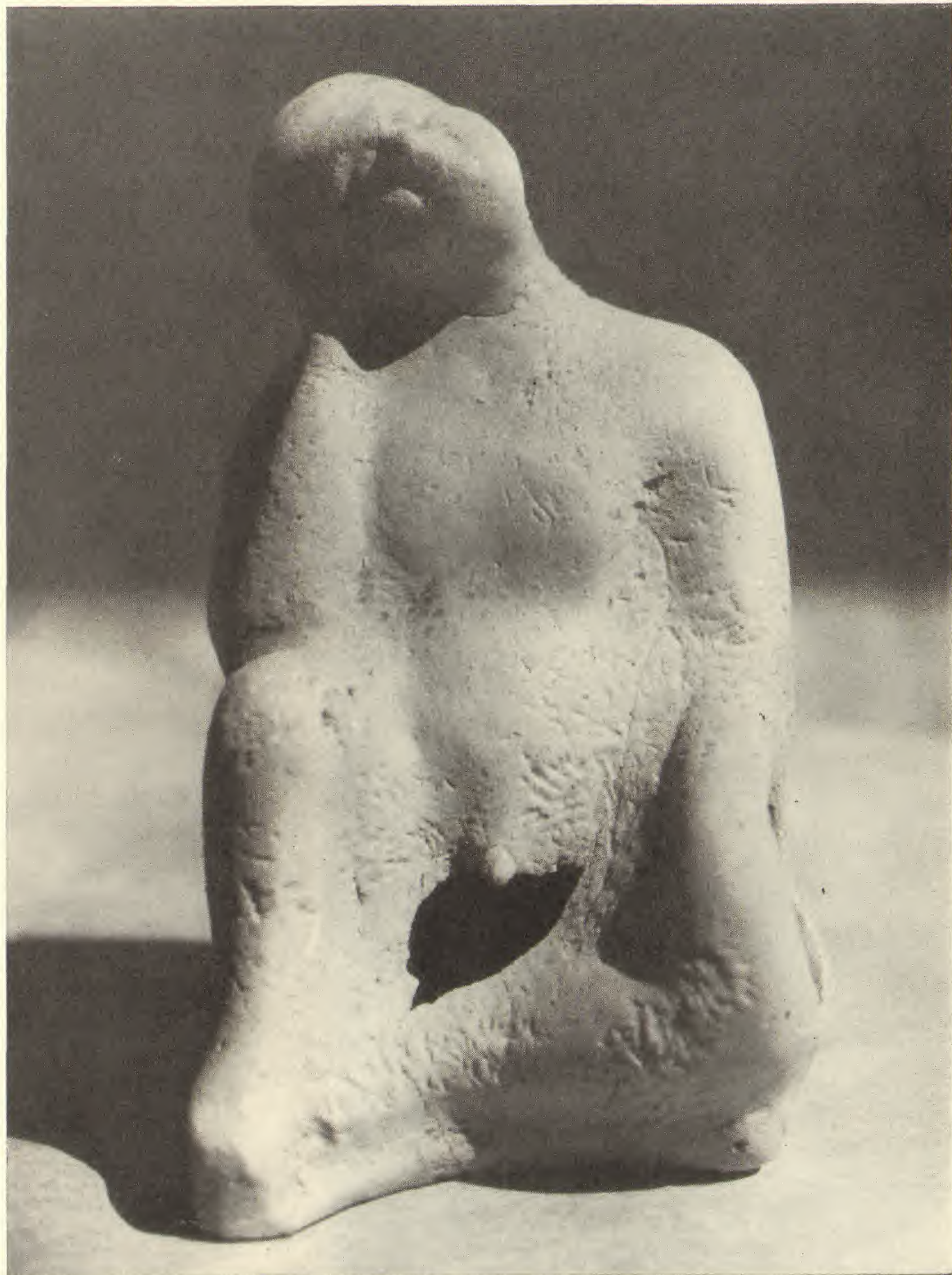


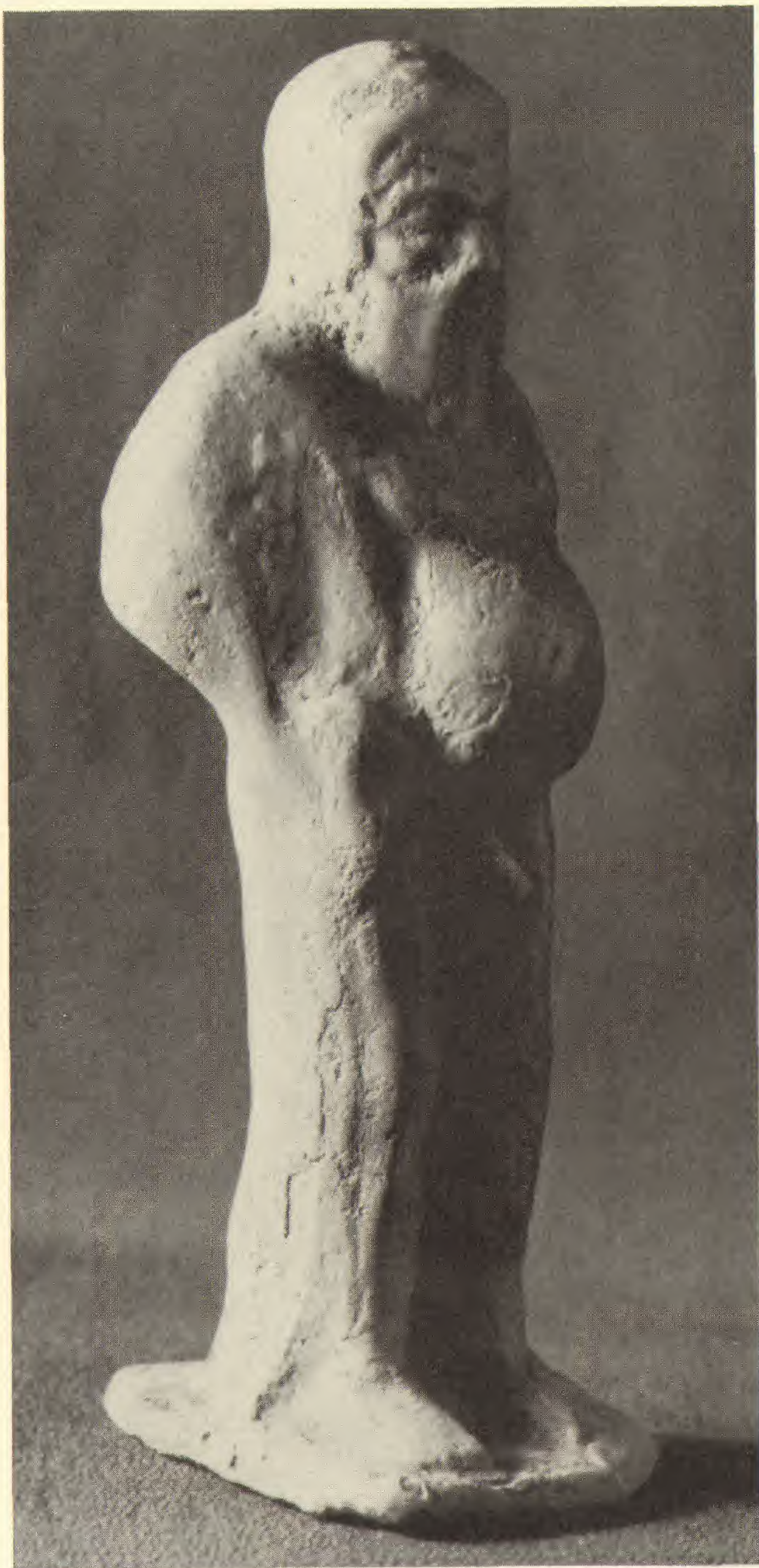
















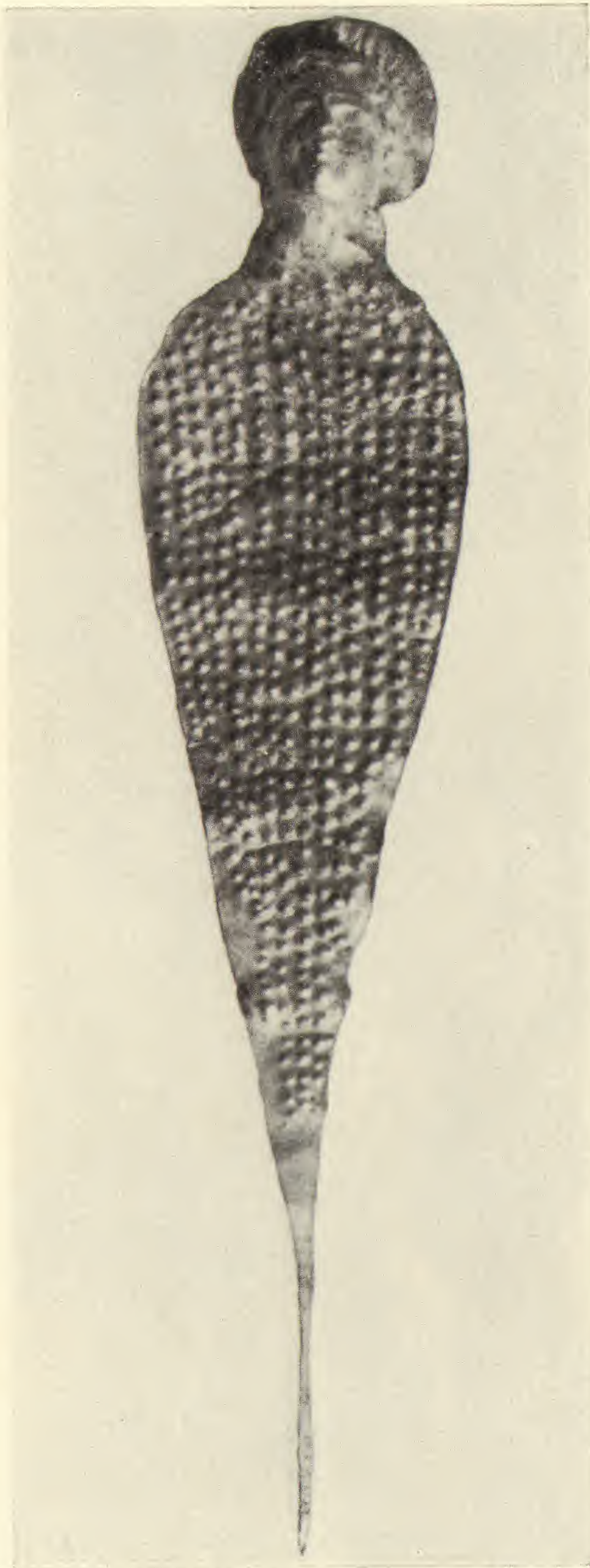
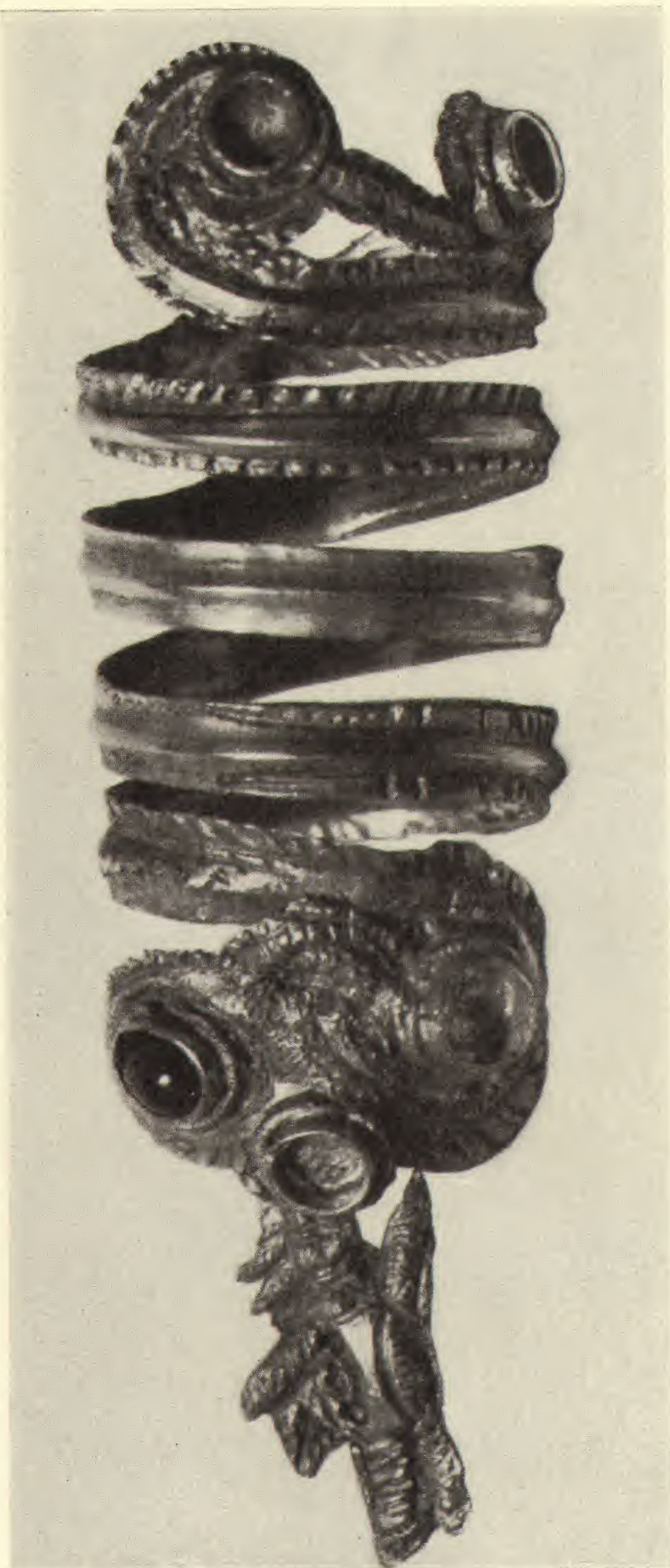










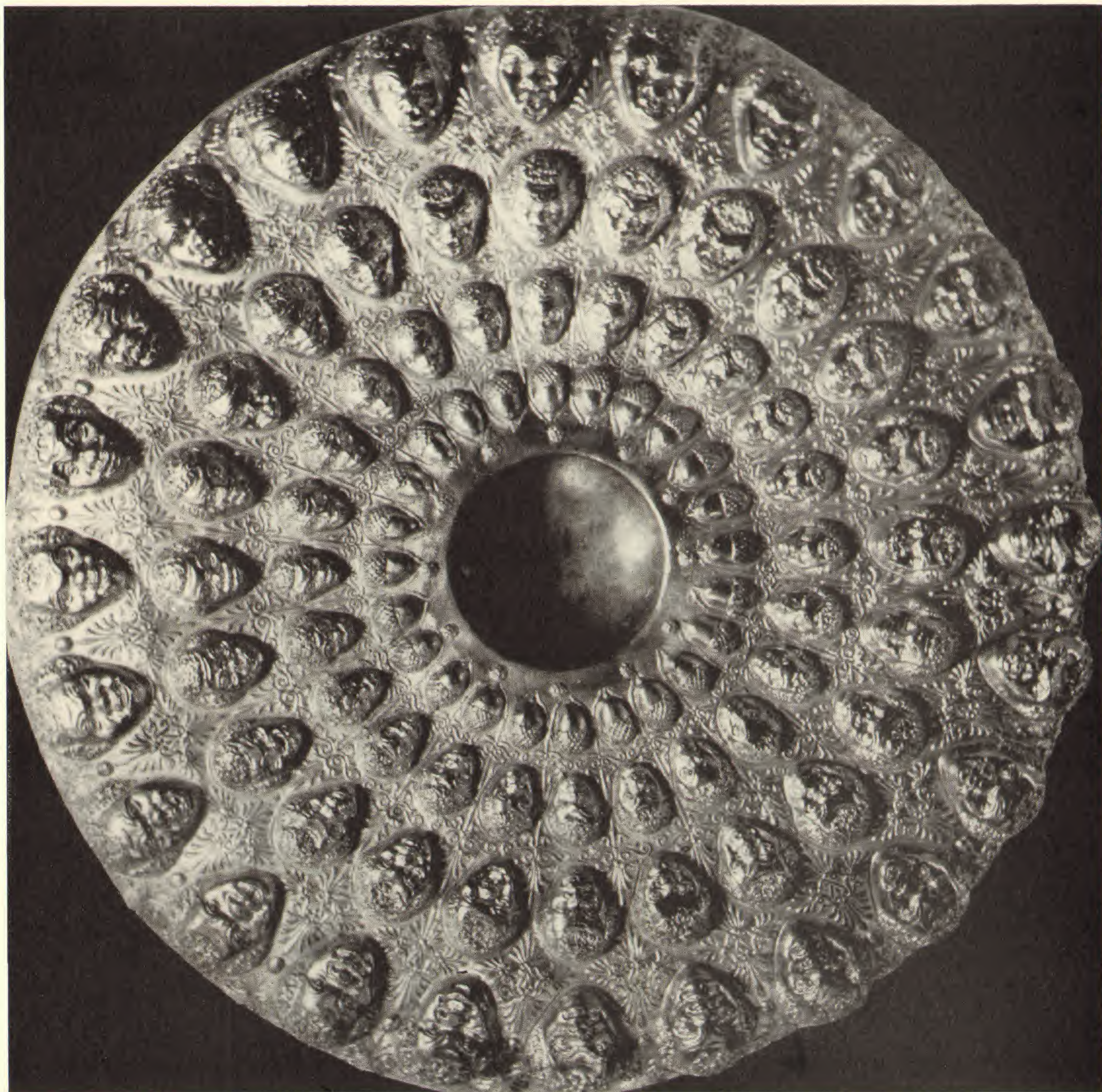


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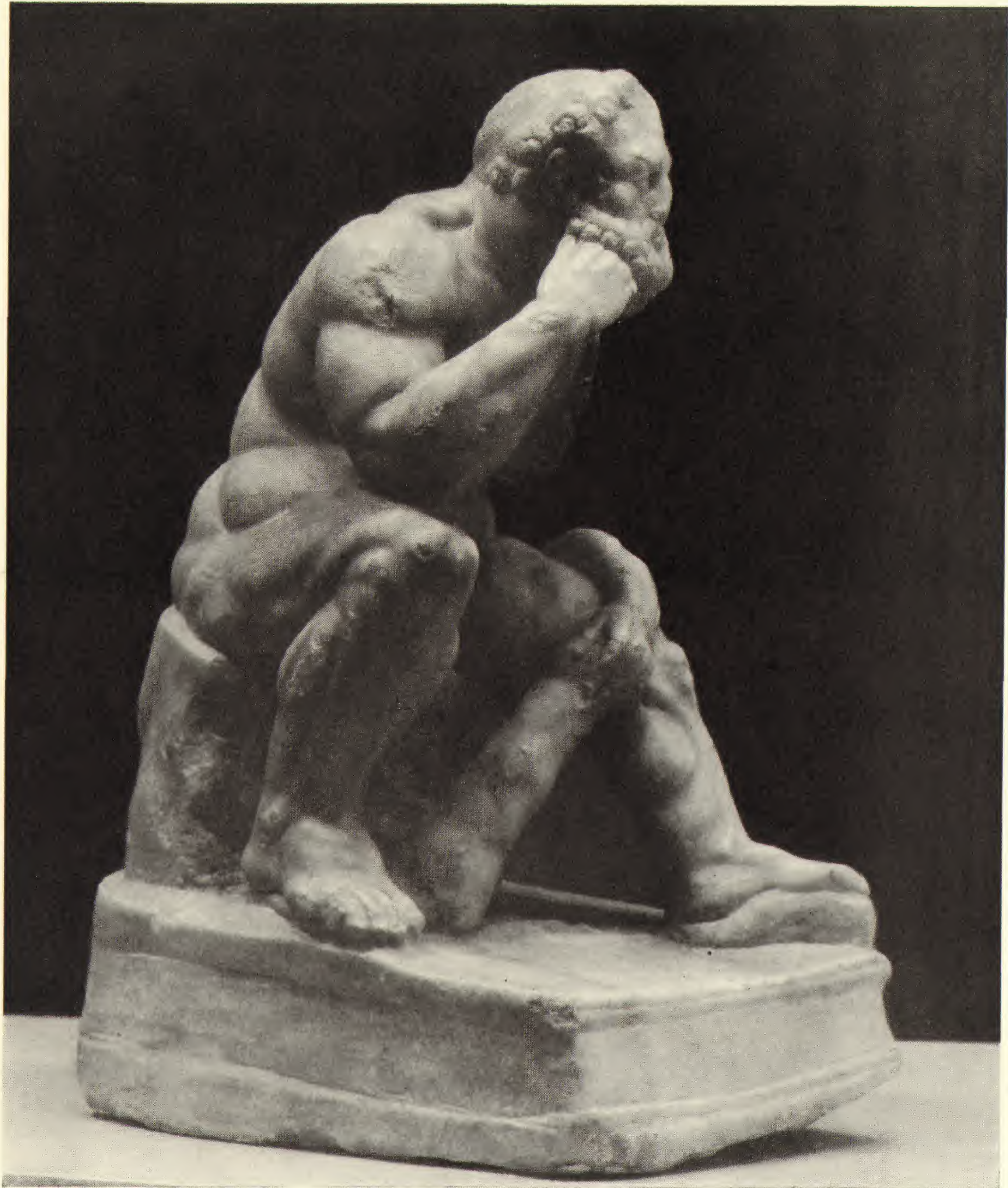




























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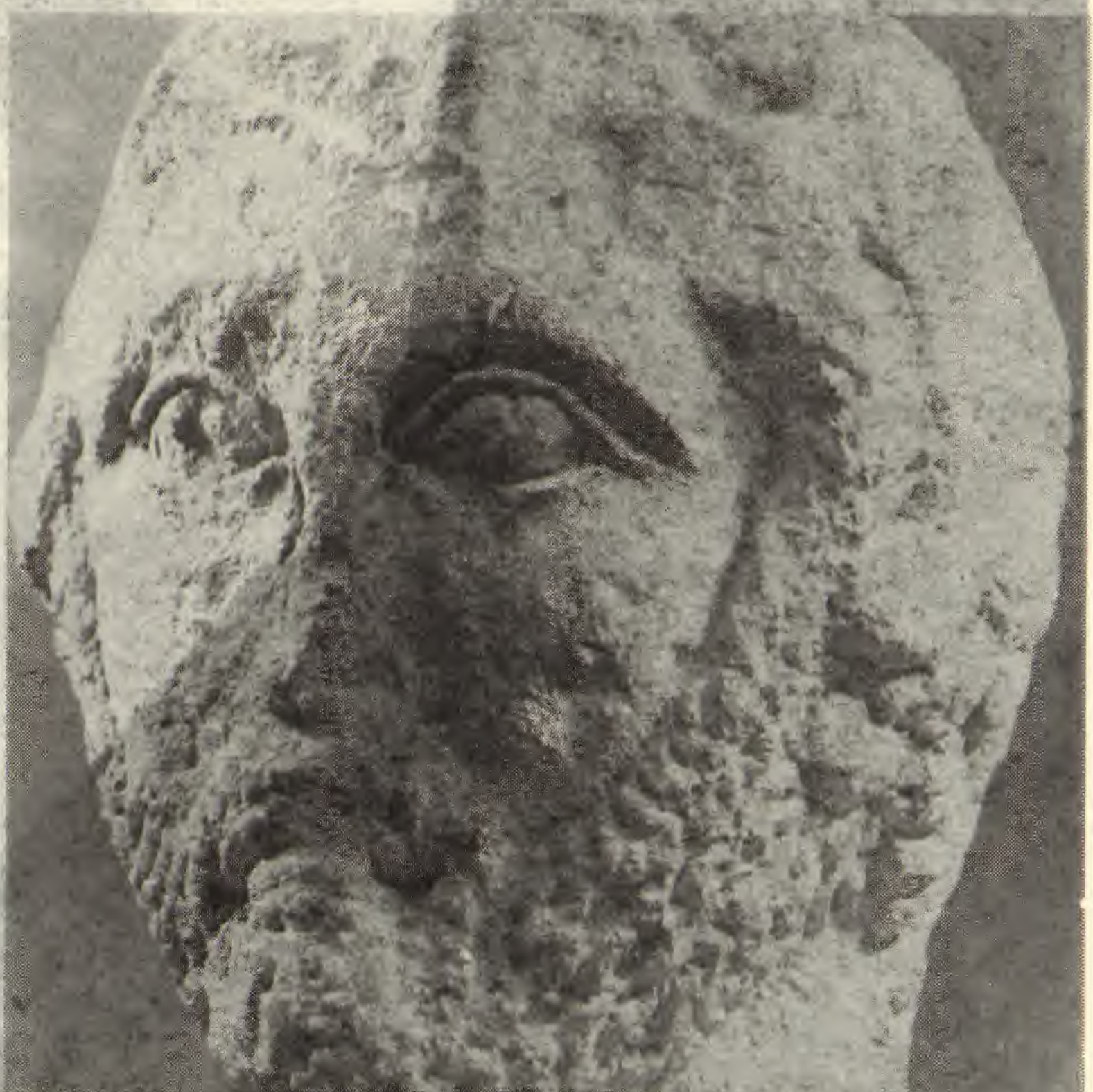
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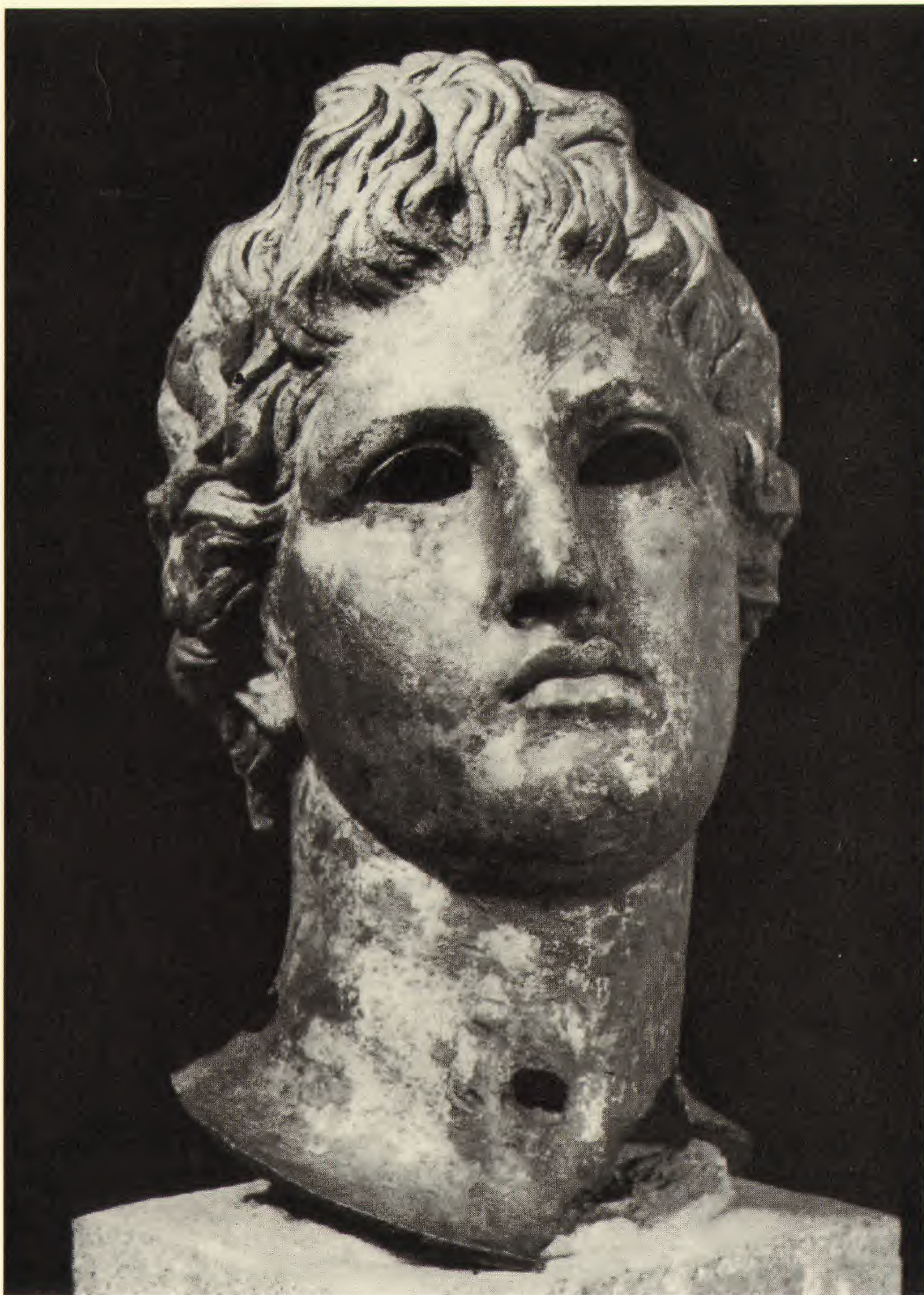












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PREHISTORIC AND ANTIQUE RELICS IN BULGARIA

Text by Senior Research Associate IVAN VENEDIKOV • Compiled by NIKOLAI TODOROV •
Editors : IRINA TSONKOVA, DIMITER MIHAILOV • Art Editor: VESSELIN TSAKOV •
Photoeditor: STOIKO KOZHOUHAROV • Photography: ROSA STANEVA ILIANA GEN-
CHEVA STOIKO KOZHOUHAROV • Technical Editor: KIRIL VASSILEV • Proof-reader :
ILINA MIRKOVA • 13 Printer's sheets • Format 1/12 65/92 • Printed in the BALKAN State Printing
House • Binding: The Printing House of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

